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CLOUDS THAT FLEE

“Rocks, caves and hills that stand and clouds that flee.”



CORONATION OF KING EDWARD VII
THE AUTHOR AT WHITEHALL

CLOUDS THAT FLEE
Reminiscences by COLONEL
MONTAGUE COOKE, D.S.O.

*Illustrated by the late Lt.-Col. E. A. Hobday,
C.M.G., and two sketches by L. Raven Hill*

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FOR
ROSEMARY, GIOIA AND JENNY

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I OWE gratitude to the Editor of *Punch* for allowing me to quote "Cricket in France"—to A. A. Milne, Maurice Baring, J. C. Squire, Alfred Noyes and others, for the lovely lines I have quoted.

I can think of no better words to express General Smith-Dorrien's life and character than those used by W. Kean Seymour in his poem* on the life of the late John Galsworthy.

As regards the illustrations I am very grateful to L. Raven Hill for his two War sketches, and to the late Lieut.-Colonel E. A. Hobday, C.M.G., for his many accurate drawings.

* "Time Stands", and other poems, by W.K.S. (Gollancz.)

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FOREWORD, BY WAY OF DEDICATION

What can a wanderer bring
To little ones loved like you ?
You have songs of your own to sing
That are far more steadfast and true,
Crumbs of pity for birds
That flit o'er your sun-swept lawn
Songs that are dearer than all our words
With a love that is clear as the dawn.

Kind little eyes that I love,
Eyes forgetful of mine
In a dream I am bending above
Your sleep and you open and shine ;
And I know as my own grow blind
With a lonely prayer for your sake,
He will hear—even me—little eyes that were kind,
God bless you, asleep or awake.

ALFRED NOYES.

FTER years of happy married life I have written this book for you, my three dear lovely children.

You will not learn much in it beyond a little insight into the rather ordinary life of your father. Between the lines is the essence of the life ; not what you read, but the message it conveys there—when the last word has been said.

You who love animals, who love the little creatures on God's earth, who love little helpless beings, will know at all events that, with the harshness and the hard language quoted in many instances of fifty years, there exists, underlying all, intense pity and sympathy for the under dog, and a loathing for the bully and for all forms of cruelty.

With the advantage of an upbringing in a lovely home with a father and mother, your grandparents, whom I loved and who

loved me, an unkind nature resulting from this happy childhood would indeed be a false note. But apart from that, weakness and selfishness and faults . . . so many, are obviously too apparent to attempt to conceal. Experience has taught me that in all the storms and fun of life each one of us is quite alone in the world.

All my life I have been happy. Happy yourselves, my loved ones, you create happiness, it radiates in all directions, and in all the world there is so much that is beautiful to make us happy.

I shall make beauty out of many things :
Lights, colour, motions, sky and earth and sea,
The soft unbosoming of all the springs
Which that inscrutable Hand allows to me,
Odours of flowers, sounds of smitten strings,
The voice of many a wind in many a tree,
Fields, rivers, moors, swift feet and floating wings,
Rocks, caves and hills that stand and clouds that flee,

Men also and women, beautiful and dear,
Shall come and pass and leave a fragrant breath ;
And my own heart, laughter and pain and fear ;
The majesties of evil and of death. . . .

J. C. SQUIRE.

PART ONE

CHAPTER I

EARLY DAYS

A BATH OF BRANDY—DINARD—WINDBAGS THE GOVERNESS—BRETON
ARISTOCRACY—THE QUEEN OF DINARD—THE ADMIRAL—DIVERSIONS
AT BRIGHTON—MIKE—THE SUFFOLK HOME—THE FAMILY

I WAS born in London at the house of Douglas Arden, my godfather, where my father and mother were staying at the time.

It was during Disraeli's Ministry, and Queen Victoria, that year, 1877, was declared Empress of India.

My brother was born at our house, number 26 Curzon Street, Mayfair.

I was very delicate as a tiny child and the doctor in despair put me in a bath of brandy to revive me. Unfortunately I was too young to appreciate my surroundings; I never had such an opportunity again—a bath of old brandy, and I survived.

Although our home was in London my father rented lovely houses elsewhere before he purchased his father's old home in Suffolk. He took a house near Bursledon in Hampshire where—always a fair shot—he had some shooting of his own. And later on Crawley Grange in Buckinghamshire, built and lived in by Cardinal Wolsey, and later annexed by Henry VIII.

I was three years old and I remember my father hunted at Crawley; a vague memory of house parties, the beauty of its surroundings and the dignity of its warm red brick loveliness.

That year, 1880, General Roberts marched from Kabul to Kandahar and defeated the Afghans at Pir Paimal.

In 1882 we were at Dinard, the dear Dinard of old days with its "côte d'émeraude," the simple unostentatious and

happy life of warm friendships before the Yankee disturbed this peaceful and charming Breton sea town with his nasal twang and his dollars.

La Falaise, our little home, was delightfully situated overlooking the beautiful bay of St. Malo. The garden lovingly tended by my father, an expert gardener, ran its whole length along the edge of the cliff above the sea and rocks. From the broad verandah and terrace one gazed directly at St. Servan with its old prison tower and cale, three miles across the blue water; to the right the river Rance with its prettily wooded banks, flowing into the bay; away to the left the old grey walls of the fortified town, St. Malo.

A few memories of my early days stand out very clearly. There were two of us, my sister was born years later. My brother, three years older than I, was the gem of the party.

He was good and good-looking and loved his lessons; and, indeed, in after years examinations were the salt of his life; whereas I was not good and I hated all lessons. I was not a beauty and nobody ever stopped in the road to look at my face twice.

It would be wrong to create the idea that my brother was a prig, because even at seven years I saw him on several occasions kiss the very attractive lady of the same age, quite unnecessarily I thought, after their lessons on the violin. And I know he has kissed many since.

As for his experiences as time went on when cramming for the army in gay Victorian London, he would decidedly not come under the heading of "priggish" or even "dull."

He had the brain and his brother had not. The governess, Miss Windus, was past her youth. She possessed the long and regular features of the average female, a tall, thin, stooping, narrow-chested woman. She sported pince-nez on the bridge of her straight nose. Her teeth, not her own, were long and even; and these were rinsed every night in a tumbler of water by the bedside. A fluff of hair sprinkled her weakish chin. The coiffure, not all her own, was greying and a neat straight



MY BROTHER (WINDBAGS' GOOD LGG) IN CHARGE OF THE AUTHOR
(NOT SO GOOD)



WASHBROOK GRANGE
MY BROTHER SOLDIER AND I TONIGHT MYSELF IN A BOWLER HAT MY MOTHER

fringe hung low over the seamed forehead. In spite of these handicaps I did not dislike her. She was kind-hearted.

Her intelligence was undeniable. She was a good teacher where the pupil played up to her. Very early in history she had realized that to expend more than a very little energy in her teaching on number two was sheer waste of time—I did not play up to her. Her attention, therefore, was directed on number one, my brother.

She and I were not in sympathy; she literally taught me nothing and my thoughts and dreams dwelt on pursuits outside the schoolroom.

To avoid lessons with Miss Windus, or “Windbags” as she was labelled, I became exceedingly cunning, always aided and cheered on by Mike the butler. I would, for instance, at La Falaise, escape from the schoolroom to an adjoining room where I would be locked in by Mike. From this refuge it was with the agility of long practice that I leaped out of the window into the lovely little garden overlooking the sea—paradise after the schoolroom—where I hid for the rest of the morning and played with a large friendly dog of uncertain breed, who loved me as a playmate, and had been waiting patiently for this daring escape.

Only once at that tender age did I see my brother, who had always a wonderful control of his feelings, show considerable animation. Windbags in a rage took up one of her own books and hurled it at her favourite pupil. He ducked and the precious book fell in pieces. My brother uttered the unpleasant and irreverent word—“Sucks.”

One of Windbags’ hobbies was to keep an aquarium, a small glass tank a foot square, in which she collected in the green water, prawns, shrimps, anemones and seaweed.

Towards the end of the week this home of sea life became most unsavoury, and I catch my breath now when I recollect the stench of those highly flavoured prawns and anæmic-looking anemones just before their bath water was changed.

A certain contrivance, consisting of a bent pipe, enabled one

to change the rank sea water once a week by blowing down the pipe.

Unfortunately on one occasion Windbags in error breathed in instead of blowing out, with the dire result that she all but swallowed two unfortunate prawns and an anemone, which were unwillingly sucked up the spout. This to our intense delight.

My father always said that Windbags was very intelligent. I think he thought so because she was interested in politics ; and probably because he felt he could practise his speeches on this victim without incurring the chance of uncomplimentary comment.

On and off for years we went to Dinard, where, on the coast overlooking the glorious *plage*, my father eventually bought a small villa. The English people who lived there, whether for economy or for the attraction of this place, were as a rule of the nicest sort.

¶ Dinard was the children's paradise with its glorious coast of small sandy bays affording endless adventures, with their shallow pools and rocks for shrimping and bathing.

In Normandy and Brittany some of the oldest and most aristocratic French families have their homes. From the time in which that great, rough, simple warrior Du Guesclin, of fourteenth-century fame, lived, the old families of Brittany have probably in many respects changed very little. They are proud and in their pride live simply. A hard living race of men. Splendid sailors, for Brittany supplies the personnel of France's navy. Splendid seamen, the fisheries of Newfoundland testify to this. Religious and somewhat superstitious ; this friendly, homely country forms part of, but is still quite apart from, France. With a thriftiness almost unknown in England, the counts and barons kept their humble and comfortable homes going, often working, themselves, on their farms.

Many a time have I seen Madame la Comtesse this and that, accompanied by her *bonne à tout faire*—and confidential companion combined—in the market-place, bargaining to the last

sou over some carrots or other market produce, and carrying off in her basket a *poulet* or a pat of butter she had rescued from the market stall for two *sous* less than the *marchand* had anticipated. Or it might be worth her while to cross over the bay to the old smugglers' town of St. Servan where, having considered the cost of the boat journey, five *sous* there and back, it was still a saving to do her marketing across the water. Then you would see Madame la Comtesse with her peasant woman stepping off the boat on to the Dinard cale with loaded baskets from which hung the depressing and long skinny necks of the fowls she had with infinite cunning extorted from some wily, but not wily enough, old Breton farmer. On the morning's work she was five or six *sous* to the good.

These careful housewives were charming to meet, full of conversation and intelligence, and of great dignity in their homes and at the many gatherings in this happy, sunny Dinard.

In my early days I remember an American lady who arrived there with her ancient mother. They lived very quietly for two or three years. One day she built a great house with a ball-room and stage combined. She entertained lavishly. Many rather impoverished but titled people were invited to stay. Several seedy and rather down-at-heel princes filled this house of entertainment; and all her guests were titled.

Presently we learnt that she herself was a descendant of Pocahontas; she certainly possessed the features of a Red Indian. People were interested, and besides she paid the bill, and became the Queen of Dinard.

Even the old Breton families, proud and looking down their noses—ever so little—with hesitating steps, stepped in.

As a youth of seventeen I danced with this descendant of Pocahontas who glittered in diamonds and was now rising sixty-eight years.

On one occasion, at one of her dazzling entertainments, with the sweetest smile this distinguished old lady turned to me: "Will you kindly take Mama to bed." Mama was rising ninety; it was three in the morning and she had supped well. The frail

old lady, bejewelled and painted up, was led up the stairs on the arm of this youth.

Under the paint and powder, in this amazing old couple, there dwelt kind hearts.

When finally this wonderful hostess passed out, her poor body was packed in an orange box and carried to England in a cargo boat. Very few of the many who had so readily accepted her gifts and been so splendidly entertained, were interested in the orange box.

Such is life. . . .

Occasionally the French entertained. At one afternoon party given by a charming middle-aged Frenchman, our host himself sang all the afternoon. He had a fine voice, the singing was good and our admiration for the Frenchie was only slightly impaired by the knowledge that he had had a too friendly alliance with the good-looking daughter of our old Breton char.

Our songster was energetically accompanied on a flute by a very short snuffy little count, an Armenian Jew, with a bald head and a squint. He had bought his title at considerable expense. The Count dribbled down his flute to such an extent that the parquet became decidedly damp.

I remember my mother feeling rather ill at the unpleasant spectacle of this instrumentalist. Every now and then in the heated room, where all windows were closed, one heard the gentle murmuring of the old French ladies: "Ah, mais c'est charmant." They referred, of course, to our host's songs—not to the unsavoury little flautist.

I remember in 1882, just before we went to Dinard, when I was five years old, sitting at a window in Grosvenor Gardens and seeing a contingent of the Household Cavalry riding past to the tune of "The Conquering Hero Comes," played by their gold-clad and jockey-capped band.

The Guards and Household Cavalry in tropical helmets, were returning from the Egyptian Campaign. As far as I recollect there were wounded troopers in the saddles with bandaged heads and arms in slings.

One day, in 1882, during the tennis tournament at Dinard, where each year many of the first-class players of those days, English and French, assembled, the Club was crowded with the *élite* of Dinard, watching the finals in the championship.

I was very small at that time. I was dressed in a white sailor suit with a straw hat on my head, and engaged in doing duties of ball-boy, when all of a sudden the door, between the high walls which partly enclosed the centre court, was violently burst open.

I remember I was astounded to see issue from the doorway a British Admiral in full fig, i.e. dressed in the full-dress uniform of Her Majesty's Royal Navy; his gold epaulettes, cocked hat and red whiskers blazing in the sun.

To the amazement of the crowd which was engrossed in the tennis, this apparition strode into the middle of the court where he stood facing me (in my isolated position as ball-boy) and *drew his sword*.

I well remember the sinister look on his face as he eyed my shrinking form . . . a miniature blue-jacket. The only thought in my confused and guilty brain was: "What have I done now?"

Obviously our Admiral had run amok. He waved his sword and ignoring me, advanced with no hesitating steps towards the fashionable spectators who, one and all, vanished like smoke at the sight of him.

There was a veritable stampede in the Dinard tennis courts. In a very few seconds our representative of the British Navy had cleared the courts as sweepingly as decks on a battleship are cleared for action.

Incidentally, it was not the season just then in France to air any British uniform, since "Albion perfide" had lately somewhat irritated the French nation over some incident abroad.

I personally fled in a panic as soon as the fearsome Admiral turned his back, so I never knew how he was eventually

captured. One has to suppose that this ex-naval officer had become unbalanced in mind through sunstroke or for other reasons.

My theory is that he caught his wife overhauling his musty, moth-eaten uniform ; that they came to logger-heads over the subject, she caught him a whang over the head and bolted ; and that he, half-conscious and dazed with the blow, hastily donned his old naval rig-out, and, shedding moth-balls in every direction, was searching for her and revenge amongst the tennis onlookers.

But this is merely supposition.

The unfortunate episode caused great consternation amongst the French. The *Entente Cordiale* had not so far materialized.

For reasons not clear now my parents chose to take a house at Brighton in 1886, just before we went to our first school in the New Forest.

On the Brighton front there was much to be learnt at the ages of nine and twelve respectively. Punch and Judy shows attracted my brother to the extent of his having a set of dolls carved in oak by the real Punch and Judy showman.

He became a talented performer with the dolls, and many a show was given for the benefit of the villagers in Suffolk, who, both old and young, could not help enjoying the expert performance given by this youth : the mimicry and mannerisms of Punch and his colleagues exhibited with my brother's usual thoroughness.

My attention, on the other hand, was riveted on two different entertainments presented on Brighton seashore : one, the lovely golden-haired mermaid who supped and drank nonchalantly below water in a tank—somewhat *décolletée* : and the other, the nonconformist minister in tall hat and sinister garments who preached on the pebbled beach. This last had to be re-enacted at home, and on a Sunday evening our cook (my only audience) was ordered by me to attend service in the drawing-room at a certain hour. A large black Bible was purchased for this

entertainment. The cook sat down and after a decent interval my small figure suddenly rose from behind a screen, draped in a night-gown, which resembled a surplice. The cook had orders to kneel, and I read out of my black book propped up on the back of a chair.

This extremely business-like ceremony was somewhat marred by convulsions of suppressed laughter on the part of my solitary attendant, which I pretended not to notice.

Although we succeeded in introducing into our home many of the side-shows we saw in Brighton, performing fleas were not allowed there. These keen little fellows we longed to shepherd back to the house. The sight of one flea sitting up in a miniature hansom cab, whipping up his pal between the shafts, was an invigorating one; for that was one of the items on the fleas' platform on Brighton Pier.

It seems that the flea, unlike other artistes, between the acts does not suck a lemon, but (I was interested to observe), after his turn on the stage refreshes himself on the hairy hand-back of his manager, and, like a rabbit on the grassy edge of a wood on a summer evening, hops from place to place grazing, to his tiny heart's content.

Mitchell, or Mike, was steward to my father on H.M.S. *Rinaldo*. He left the Royal Navy with his master, and, like a proper sailor, married a wife who was a first-class cook. The two, man and wife, butler and cook, remained in our service until Mike died, twenty-six years later.

Mike was essentially what is known as a handy man. He was short, thick-set, with a merry fat face, with a cavity in his broad forehead, the result, no doubt, of a blow with a handspike in some naval fracas. He had sparse, curly hair.

Besides butlering most efficiently and actually superintending the excellent cuisine at our home, he had very many odd jobs on hand. For instance, when we boys organized any concert for the entertainment of our patient parents, Mike got orders to sing a song. In a quiet, husky, nondescript voice he wheezed out some painfully sentimental sea ditty, remaining in a sitting

position with a blackened face (*à la* St. James' Hall Nigger Minstrel Show).

Another duty he could be seen performing was parting with great care the few remaining hairs on my tall father's nearly bald head. For this Mike was obliged to stand on a high chair behind my father and opposite the looking-glass. My father always looked very serious when this operation was in progress, but Mike used to catch my eye in the glass and giggle silently.

Once, by mistake, my father rather impatiently swept Mike off the chair, and the little man took a header through a cupboard, unhurt.

Mike loved us and would have attempted a vault over the moon for us. He was commanded by us once to engage in a sack-race to be run on the gravel. With his third hop he landed with his head on the gravel. He now had two holes in his forehead. He bled like a pig, smiling all the while, trussed up in a sack with his head on the lap of his weeping wife.

Perhaps Mike looked his best when driving the donkey-cart. He was more successful in this than in the dog-cart, as this usually ended in the "Grange" mare having a fit of the "staggers"; and this always defeated Mike.

I only once saw him smoke. In a small tobacco shop in St. Malo, just before sailing for England, when he had charge of us two boys, in a merry mood he recklessly bought and smoked a cigar. I remember he was sick in the street outside the shop, almost at once.

But what a faithful servant !

INLAND VILLAGE

This is their world : this portion of the earth
Means much to them—nay, do not mock nor jeer ;
This spot has held the things to them most dear :
Their earliest dreams, their sorrows and their mirth.

Who enters it must never count the worth
Of homes in terms of gold lest he appear
As one whose heart is sadly out of gear—
Who holds no reverence for their place of birth.

Evenings come gently, housewives turn to light
Their lamp and spread the table's simple fare :
Then comes the friendly clicking of a gate
That marks the day's soft blending with the night,
And all the little houses seem to wear
A peace unknown to mansions of the great.

MARGARET E. BRUNER.

The dear memory of Washbrook Grange, our Suffolk home from which we originally came, must remain with me always.

By the time my father had succeeded in purchasing my grandfather's old home, he had lost a fortune, so that the life there was necessarily a quiet one. The old house, once a small monastery, breathed an atmosphere of sweet content. It was a humble centre in old world Suffolk where nothing changes much ; to which any who came, rich or poor, old or young, must have recognized a sense of peace and comfort.

The poor in their thatched cottages round about our home came there in their troubles, quite certain that they would not be denied ; for my father and mother looked upon it as their privilege to help.

I have seen my mother sitting quietly and sympathetically by the bedside of some tiny suffering child ; holding the withered hand of some old cottager gasping out her tired life ; bringing food and relief to some fellow-creature in pain. My father giving the cheering chaffing note to the labourer in the field.

How they must have missed those two when we left Washbrook. Their name there, more than forty years afterwards, is still remembered with affection.

When the villagers came to Washbrook, for school-treats and so on, the entertaining, except for the generous meal, was left entirely to my brother and me (by this time both at Eton), and

I can see now the eager faces of the villagers strained forward to watch my brother holding his audience with his conjuring tricks and, as a final *coup*, producing from an apparently empty box gifts for every child there.

Then the faultless Punch and Judy Show ; and, in the winter, the oldest inhabitant tearing down the ice path in a toboggan at forty miles an hour, under the guidance of this boy of fifteen, who, with complete confidence, just pulled up in time to prevent some eighty-year-old grandmother from taking a header through the glass conservatory.

Food, all home-made, was provided in ample supply by Mike and his pleasant-faced wife, who took a pride in serving these poor, and always grateful people, with the best available. Bread, cakes, jam, etc., and elderberry wine, were all made in the jolly oak-beamed kitchen.

In the holidays at Washbrook I had a pony to ride. On one occasion I thought I could celebrate my last day before returning to Park Hill by a final race round the field. I wished to imitate the jockeys I had seen the week before at some local races. I bought a peaked cap, quartered in blue and red colours. With this gaudy cap drawn down over the forehead I raced round the meadow, going like the wind, to the astonishment of my pony.

Round a bend my steed placed his foot in a small drain. After turning a complete somersault in the air, I landed in the mud on my new cap and my face. With exuberance of spirits now completely worn off I returned home much sobered, leading my pony ; and I went so far as to consider racing . . . a mug's job.

My grandfather, on my father's side, came from Washbrook, Suffolk, of which parish he was rector. His mother's grandfather, my great-great-grandfather, was offered a baronetcy and peerage by King George IV on his accession, as a mark of esteem and appreciation of earnest labours in the cause of humanity ; and was a friend at Court.

Then why not accept the baronetcy and peerage, and anything

else going? Do people who are offered gifts by Royalty consider it the clever thing to refuse such honours?

It smacks to me in the light of snobbishness. It is surely a form of selfishness to refuse titles which at least your children and grandchildren might appreciate.

Having made his runs and been offered his colours, it is not cricket and hardly civil to his King to refuse.

And, had he accepted the dignity, his grandchildren's footman might have worn a cockade in his top hat—just think of it!

On my mother's side it would seem there is no English blood, but that the ancestry remains Scottish both on her mother's side, which is traced back to Robert Dalzell of Dalzell, 1st Earl of Carnwath (1639), and her father's side, Mackenzie.

Alexander Mackenzie, born in 1769, was partner with David Mackintosh in their important canal engineering works throughout the country; the founder, in other words, of many of our canals along which those gaudy gondolas (or barges of this Northern Island) still find their watery way, towed by the heavy, picturesque, shaggy old horse, and in defiance of all machinery, float serenely and romantically between green banks and through wooden locks, in many parts of England. These canals, in which (not so romantic this) we throw our dead cats, and, indeed, as a last resort, we throw ourselves.

His son William, my great-uncle, a famous engineer and known throughout many countries, was thanked by the House of Commons for his efforts in the engineering world, railways in France and Canada, etc., etc.

Eventually his brother, my grandfather, succeeded William, and with the late Lord Brassey carried on the good work—and excellent pay.

My mother's home, Fawley Court, was built by Christopher Wren on the banks of the Thames. Its foundations stood on arches so that it was never damp. The gardens ran down to the river. They were lovely and so was the deer park which

descended from the hill to the road-side, and to the north sloped up to Fawley woods and village. George IV pronounced Fawley to be "the best Commoner's house in England."

On many of the ceilings of this seventeenth-century mansion are carvings by Grinling Gibbons (1648-1726), who at that period, untrammelled by convention, reproduced in his carvings of soft wood of the lime, natural chains of flowers and foliage, fruit, birds, or cherubs' heads. Otherwise the rooms inside were furnished in Victorian style with its heavy chandeliers, lace curtains, ornate chairs and tables, elegantly uncomfortable.

It was in this house of no particular taste as regards furnishing that my mother lived as a child. It is, therefore, all the more wonderful that her choice in furniture and furnishing should have differed so completely.

Our home in Suffolk lent itself in every way to simplicity, beauty and comfort combined. The lovely little oak-panelled hall with its open chimney-place and oak corner-seats.

The wide oak staircase leading from the hall, welcomed you up its broad stairs. The oak settles and old-world chairs invited you to sit down; the diamond-paned windows sparkled in the sun.

And always the lovely colour and grain of old English oak in beam and panelling to please the eye and give the sense of warmth and comfort, so good to live with.

Many lovely oak tables and chests were discovered in Ipswich, where in old days ships from Holland arrived, sailing up the River Orwell, carrying Dutch carved pieces of furniture.

To this day one may see in "Zillie Suffolk" the result of the Dutch school of carving handed down by generations of craftsmen who worked in many of its villages, and whose livelihood depended on their somewhat crude, but indefinably attractive workmanship.

In these surroundings and with a mother whose flair for beauty of colour and proportion was undeniable, it was only natural that, even as a youth, I have ever appreciated loveliness in all its forms.

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever :
Its loveliness increases ; It can never
Pass into nothingness ; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.

KEATS.

My mother, on occasions, escorted by my father, attended Queen Victoria's " Drawing Room " (or Court) at Buckingham Palace. I remember in 1881 seeing her before she started for the Palace.

She wore a dark blue velvet dress edged with Brussels lace ; round the tight-fitting bodice, where the lovely lace border fell away from the shoulder, she carried a large and beautiful diamond butterfly with ruby eyes. In her hair was a tiara of four diamond stars.

The train was immensely long and billowy, and she walked round the room to enable my brother and I, both hefty lads, to have a ride on the train, one at a time, amidst much laughter.

She was in the Victorian Age, but not of it. She was broad-minded and prepared to meet all sorts. If she took exception to anyone or anything, it was because she hated vulgarity. She was intensely religious, but never spoke of it or appeared outwardly religious. A silent example of goodness.

I have never known a better conversationalist, full of anecdotes and fun ; keenly observant of anything she saw and able to discuss it.

At any ordinary entertainment or party, on returning home how often have I heard her say : " But did you not see so-and-so ? " and then followed a description of the person or incident of the most interesting, and often most humorous, kind.

Perhaps the dearest side of this sweet woman's nature was her unselfishness. It is, perhaps, comparatively easy to be unselfish with your children, and she denied herself everlastingly for us, but to be unselfish also with, and to offer sympathy to, others outside the family circle, is another story.

Just before this dear mother of ours died, I held her hand and

I told her that my little daughter would be named after her. She smiled sweetly and said: "Rosemary for remembrance."

And so she was called.

My mother's second brother, who owned a home in Scotland, a lovely house in Suffolk, and a town house, always said he was devoted to his sister. He sent his favourite sister a brace of grouse when we were at Washbrook. The birds arrived in the last stages of "putrefication" or putrescence. Indeed, they were livelier in their basket than they had ever been in their natural state on my uncle's grouse moor.

He lived until he was over eighty; but this was the only sign of affection in the way of gifts that ever came her way.

Her eldest brother, who succeeded to a quarter of a million and owned, amongst other estates, 120,000 acres in the Highlands, was always quoted to me as looking "a thorough aristocrat." He was certainly very good looking—and very Scotch.

There must have been other qualifications which I was too dense to recognize. He was at Harrow.

Fawley Court, Temple Island, Phyllis Court, now a river club, and all the land on the left bank of the river which forms Henley Regatta rowing course, belonged to my grandfather and this uncle who succeeded him.

The third went to Eton, and later was Master of Hounds (the Old Berkeley and Woodland Pytchley) and a good judge of hounds.

These brothers were all quite well dug in to their wealth, and had little or no time to waste on insignificant nephews.

The fourth and youngest brother was a lovable fellow. He was simple and unostentatious and a good friend. I was devoted to him. He was very tall and broad with deep blue eyes. He reminded me in appearance of a gentle Lord Kitchener. When he was angry, which was seldom, his blue eyes blazed. The worst language I ever heard him use (except once) was "bally."

He lived at Bembridge, Isle of Wight, and owned considerable property in Berkshire, and had his flat in London.

He spent his life in boats and in his workshop behind the

Bembridge Sailing Club, where he could be seen mending odds and ends of sea gear, bits of boats, and even bicycles, which, however, were never quite completed and lay about the big workshop for years and years.

He was a good navigator and steered his own yacht round the coast to the Mediterranean. He used his boats for cruising and fishing, and considered racing in small craft, such as Redwings, contemptible.

Once he unexpectedly offered a prize of £100, to the Bembridge Sailing Club, for a race of the small sailing-boats there.

For two weeks the owners of these boats prepared for the race, buying new rigging, sails, etc., and going to considerable expense for the promised race. On the morning of the great contest the competitors were told the conditions by my uncle.

These were given out as follows :

“ You will sail out of Bembridge Harbour and bally well never return.” For quite a week he was exceedingly unpopular.

But everybody loved him.

Once rather rashly he invited a party of ladies to sail down to Cannes in his yacht. Weeks afterwards, on the appointed day, these fashionable ladies arrived on the quay at Bembridge with heavy luggage and hat-boxes for the cruise. My uncle could not be found anywhere. At last a waiter discovered him in the Spithead Hotel with his feet on the mantelpiece of the smoking-room, a pipe in his mouth.

He had quite forgotten about ever going on a cruise. He did swear that day. He muttered : “ Damn bally nuisance. Forgot all about it.” And then asked the silly looking waiter to tell the party it was off.

He was unpopular again.

Once he was introduced to a charming lady at a garden party.

They chattered about the weather, a perfectly sound subject, until the lady said : “ Ronald, I’m your sister.” He had been talking at length about the rain and the wind to his sister, my mother.

On one occasion his eldest brother was travelling in his kilt up to Scotland, and Ronald said, as they sat down in the railway carriage: "What the devil are you doing with that bally carriage rug round your knees?"

The dignified laird in Mackenzie tartan was considerably hurt.

My mother's five sisters were good sorts and all good looking. The youngest, and only unmarried one, I was very fond of, and in my younger days I was always made welcome at her home, which, owing to her personality and cuisine, was indeed an attractive house to stay in. She rode well to hounds and was a good whip. She understood animals and loved them.

The park in front of this delightful home, in later days, was spotted about with dumb creatures, old hunters, ponies and donkeys which a kind heart refused to destroy; and they in their turn loved her.

Dogs, bantams, cocks and hens of all varieties came under her care. To illustrate, for instance, her attention to her old fowls, I remember seeing in the stable yard one day a heap of feathers lying on the pavement. My aunt appeared at that moment: "Ah, Betsy Trig is unwell, she wants a dose."

So the heap of feathers I was looking at was a hen of uncertain age, Betsy Trig by name. My aunt ordered the ancient butler Frederick (who, man and boy, had served the Mackenzies for over forty years), to produce a bottle of tawny port.

A full glass of this good vintage was poured down Betsy's stringy throat, which she swallowed with a soft gurgle. I remember that as she swallowed the last drop of this priceless wine her yellow, rolling eye caught mine, and the chuckle she uttered sounded like "Damned good stuff"; after which she subsided again on the paving.

My aunt, full of sympathy for this rogue (for she was nothing less than shamming), then ran to the house and brought a glass of liqueur brandy for the fainting fowl, whereupon our hen, fired by this second dose, and doubtless not so accustomed to old brandy as she was to port, rose up and reeled round the yard in her cups; and as she sailed round the corner of the stable

door she laid a tipsy egg in her confusion as if to say, "That's that."

I am told that this egg was served up as a rum omelette, but I am not sure.

My father, in the Navy, served in the *Nile*, flagship of Vice-Admiral Sir Alex. Milne, and later in H.M.S. *Rinaldo* (1862-1865) during the civil war in America, under Sir William Hewitt, V.C., Later in China in H.M.S. *Basilisk*, and in 1870 was for two years in charge of the naval yard at Shanghai.

In 1885 my father was Progressive Conservative Candidate for Battersea. His worst political enemy had to admit that he was a brilliant orator.

It is significant to note that although on leaving the Navy my father's interest in life was almost entirely devoted to politics, that particular atmosphere never penetrated into the home.

I have never met anyone who was so well informed on the questions of the day or who could speak so easily on almost any subject, with a clear-thinking brain, and hold his audience in language both engaging and lucid to the listener. At Boodle's he was much loved, and I have heard him styled there, "A walking encyclopædia."

It was greatly because of his extensive general knowledge that so many fellow-creatures came to him for advice. Having a large acquaintance and considerable influence of a useful sort, he was able, with his kind heart, to help many a lame dog over the stile.

And I have known many, of classes both humble and otherwise, who have been started in life; and many youngsters who have been launched on their careers by my father.

Whereas others, unlike him, self-important and gifted with higher positions and possessions, were totally unable to help any but themselves.

To me he was more brother than father, entering into all my troubles; a pal I always went to with the certainty of immense sympathy, ready to share with me the joy or misfortune of the moment.

Tall and broad (he was six feet), he was a great athlete in his day, as thirteen or fourteen silver cups, which decorated the side-board, amply recorded ; triumphs in running, rowing, jumping and swimming.

He was a man thoroughly alive.

I saw him once when a slum house in London was on fire, on hearing from the agitated policeman at the entrance that there was a child upstairs, leap up the crumbling staircase and rescue the small creature, carrying her back to safety in those strong protective arms that I knew so well.

In the Navy on one occasion on the high seas, with full-steam ahead, he leapt overboard in a rough sea and saved a blue-jackets' life, for which act of bravery he was awarded the bronze medal.

To be heckled whilst speaking never worried him, and a gift of the gab and a keen sense of humour dissolved all difficulties.

When standing for the County Council in Suffolk he had fifty farmers against him. At a hostile meeting, when he and the village schoolmaster at Hintlesham stood alone on the platform, I saw him, in answer to some insolence on the part of a great hulking fellow, hurl him out of the room as he had promised the unfortunate but impertinent interrupter that he would do if his remarks were repeated.

The full house, a hostile one at the commencement of the meeting, rose and cheered him at the end, and I well remember the enthusiastic send-off we had from the crowd as we drove away in the brake.

He was elected County Councillor after a fine fight.

I remember one story he told at a meeting which amused the crowd. It was, I think, with reference to the top and under dog.

A blue-jacket, half-seas over with a pint or two on board, lurched down the Hard at Portsmouth until he fetched up unexpectedly with a small and very fiery admiral.

The admiral was furious at being collided into by a drunken sailor. "Where in Hell are you coming to, you ——. Do you

know who I am?" The blue-jacket, with a bleary eye, gave no sign of recognition. "I'm the Port Admiral," exclaimed this little cock-of-the-walk. Whereupon the blue-jacket with a large friendly hand, thumped the little admiral on the back: "And a damned good billet, too, you stick to it."

Sir William Hewitt, V.C., under whom my father served in the Navy, and who was perhaps his greatest friend, was my brother's godfather.

Hewitt, then Mate of H.M.S. *Beagle*, later a distinguished admiral, was ordered by Lord Raglan's A.D.C. to spike his Lancaster Gun and retreat when on the heights at Inkerman. Young Hewitt asked who sent the order: "The General," said the officer. "Then," replied Hewitt, "tell the General I am serving under Captain Lushington of the Naval Brigade, and when ordered by *him* will retreat."

He continued to fight his gun with his gallant little band of blue-jackets, turned a considerable column of Russians coming up the valley, and saved the situation.

For this initiative and cool determination he was awarded the V.C. On his return to England he was commanded to attend at Buckingham Palace where the young Queen, handing Hewitt his Victoria Cross, said in her gracious way: "And well deserved too."

When I was thirty-eight years old I was ordered to India for a short spell of service. My father, as always when I was ordered abroad, came to see me off at the London docks. He came on board and satisfied himself that I had a good cabin, etc.

He was still very upright and good to look at, but frail. He was seventy-two years old. When he said good-bye he clung to me. We clung to each other. Instinctively I knew that I would not see his beloved face again.

"God bless you, my dear boy, you may not see me again." That was our last farewell.

He had loved me with no ordinary love and showed it in everything he did and said all my life.

Had I, who loved him deeply, ever shown him how devoted

I was ? How all my life it was he who was my pal ? I doubt it and regret it. It is so often too late when we think of these things.

And yet would he have been happier had I been demonstrative in my affection ?

But I wish I had been.


Something is broken which we cannot mend.
God has done more than take away a friend
In taking you; . . .

MAURICE BARING.

CHAPTER II

SCHOOL DAYS

PARK HILL—SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT—LORD TENNYSON—ROYAL PUPILS—
ETON—QUEEN VICTORIA—THE KAISER'S VISIT—PUSH-BIKING

E both went to our first school, Park Hill, near Lyndhurst, in the New Forest, in 1887. My brother, three years older, primed with knowledge by Windbags, I, with very little knowledge of anything except of the misery in my heart at leaving home.

We were beautifully dressed in corduroy knee breeches and thick homespun coats on the evening we first arrived at school.

In a few days our parents in Suffolk received the first communication from their second dutiful son. It was the quality of the news not the quantity that counted. There was only one sentence in the missive, a post card, which many read *en route* : "All the boys are pigs. Your affate. son."

The Headmaster, W. F. Rawnsley, brother to Canon Rawnsley, had known my mother as a child at Fawley Court, Henley, her home. He was decidedly a personality. A Liberal of considerable means, he kept the school as a hobby. It was known as the "House of Lords." His circle of friends was interesting, and many of them we saw at the school, on and off.

The poet laureate, Tennyson, came there to see his grandsons, Alfred and Lionel. Each year the small school, twenty or so boys, visited Lord Tennyson at his home in Freshwater.

Once he brought the beautiful actress Mary Anderson with him, and I remember that she wore a thick veil, which was disappointing.

William Gladstone, four times Premier of England, we gave a picnic for ; and the G. O. M. chattered to us boys at tea under Knightwood oak. Sir William Harcourt, the Liberal leader, who lived at Malwood, sent his son Robert to Park Hill. Once I stayed at Malwood.

Sir William Harcourt, a devil in politics, was delightful with children, and the great big figure dressed in very loose and large tweeds, beamed with kind-heartedness. Harcourt was Chancellor of the Exchequer under Gladstone in 1886 and 1892, and in Rosebery's short-lived Ministry in 1894 ; and retired as Leader of the Liberal Party in 1899.

He told me once to tell my father, who had been standing as Conservative Candidate for Battersea, that he was a blackguard for his political views ; laughing heartily at my dismay.

Lady Gosford, whose son was at the school, took Minstead Lodge, where I spent happy days playing with Lord Acheson's three sisters and meeting the lovely Duchess of Devonshire there.

The other masters at Park Hill consisted of Wordsworth, grandson of the poet, tall, always immaculately dressed, and J—— the Swiss master.

J—— was an unusual character. He taught everything when required, classics, music, languages, history and anything else, to order. He was tall and fat with a mop of dark red hair and a thick red beard. In fact, his head was all hair, relieved by two fat cheeks, a nose, and gold-rimmed spectacles. If he took his glasses off it was difficult to calculate what his eyes would do, for he squinted so outrageously. His eyeballs travelled at an amazing rate in every direction, but never together. He played all games as no Englishman could ever play any game. He never changed his clothes for outdoor exercise. At hockey, if a small boy caught him a whack on the shins, his eyeballs rolled, and with clenched teeth he would pursue, not the ball, but the aggressor, until he had returned blow for blow and was quits. And often during the game I saw him pull out of his grey flannel trousers pocket a large turnip watch at the

end of a steel chain, with which weapon, as a last resort, he would tap the offender on the head, hissing: "You nasty leetle fellow."

He breathed loudly during these violent games, all over you, jingling coppers in his trousers pockets as he puffed up the uneven hockey ground. Once, at piano lessons, when he banged my small fingers down on the notes I had missed, I called J—— a damned fool, and was caned for it.

He collected moths, butterflies and caterpillars, and smelt of them; and his cottage at the Lodge gates reeked of naphthaline and mouldering moths. A character, and we all liked him; there was nothing but kindness about him in spite of his occasional wrath.

Queen Victoria sent for Rawnsley and told him she had heard good accounts of his school, and that she would send her grandsons there.

She expressed satisfaction in the fact that Rawnsley was not in the Church in his capacity of headmaster of a school.

So Prince Alexander of Battenberg and the Duke of Saxe-Coburg joined the little school.

When I went to Eton in 1891 Doctor Warre was Headmaster. He was splendid to look at, magnificent as Head of the School, and would have been powerful at the head of anything, in physique and mind.

I shared the same room with my brother, already an Etonian of three years' standing. We were at "Boggy" Drews. At the house were: Lygon, Tayleur, Neave, C. L. Gosling, Harold Cuthbert, Hermon and McCausland, etc.

One of our pastimes was to shy lumps of coal at a curious looking little master next door, whose back-garden our window overlooked. Before breakfast each day this freak of nature took an energetic walk round and round his garden plot in a disreputable dressing-gown. He had, as he progressed, a curious habit of moving his none too beautiful head backwards and forwards in spasms, like a mandarin.

Whenever he appeared round the corner, and within range,

we sprayed his skinny knees with coal. Whether he was too shy or his skin was too tough I never knew, but the coal barrage had apparently not the slightest effect on him.

Later on I went to Sidney James' house; he was also my tutor. He was understanding and human and always nice to me. It was a good house. George Lane, the Walters (of *The Times*), Bonds, Lord Wicklow, Guy Dawney, Coldstream Guards, who wrote the orders for that brilliant campaign in Palestine, Lord Dunluce, etc., were in the house.

Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle, where she frequently stayed, often drove down through Eton. It was always said she drove down in her open landau on purpose to get the chance of being saluted by the small Eton boys, 'who, standing at the edge of the pavement when they saw the dear old lady drive past, solemnly took off their, often disreputable, top hats with a flourish. It was worth her while to drive past. On one occasion Her Majesty drove into Weston's Yard in her open carriage. Worked up to a state of great enthusiasm a crowd of small Etonians ran behind the Royal carriage and, quite innocently, clung hold of the mudguard. The little lady, propped up by cushions, leant forward and with her parasol tapped the small impertinent fists until they let go.

Whilst at Eton there was quite a sprinkling of Royalty, our own and foreign, Dukes and Peers, and so on : there always are, which has affected the school very little, as naturally all are treated alike.

It was an honour to have *some* of them there ; on the other hand it was an honour for *all* of them to be there. There was no snobbery at Eton, less perhaps than at any other school. It is others, non-Etonians, who proclaim the snobbery.

A good many notabilities have visited Eton. Many have left their card, so to speak, at the school, unnoticed. But I remembered the following notable visit and wrote what I remembered of it this year to *The Times*, forty-two years after the Kaiser's visit.

“Blank Dismay.

The Kaiser and the Private.

SIR, here is yet another possible cause of the Great War.

In July, 1891, I was a small boy at Eton. H.I.M. Kaiser Wilhelm II on a visit to his grandmother, Queen Victoria, at Windsor, came down from the Castle to inspect the Eton Volunteers.

I stood under a tree in the playing-fields behind the band, which was composed of bandsmen of the Guards, to stiffen up the noise, with a sprinkling of Etonians playing the easier instruments, such as the big drum, the bassoon and a fife or two.

My brother helped in this music by playing the clarinet (although I had never once heard him practise on it off parade). This instrument on occasions took charge and rose to a high shriek, to the dismay of its player—and deep concern of all listeners.

The school volunteers of that day were perhaps not entirely serious in their soldiering, but they presented a brave show.

The arrival of the German Emperor was staggering in its magnificence. Escorted by a brilliant staff of officers, British and German, the Kaiser rode down the line of grey-flannelled volunteers, on a white charger, himself in the white uniform of the Prussian Guard, his silver cuirass and spread-eagled helmet flashing in the sun.

Three rounds of blank had been issued to our gallant troops for a little manœuvring which was to take place after the Imperial Inspection. The Inspection over, H.I.M. took up his stand opposite this martial array, which had now assumed the rather threatening and old fashioned attitude of volley firing, rear rank standing and front rank kneeling.

On the command ‘Fire’ the clicking of two hundred rifles was interrupted by a roar from Private C——’s weapon, fired exactly opposite the horse which held ‘Seine Kaiserliche und Konigliche Hoheit’ in its saddle.

One can hardly believe C—— fired his blank purposely.

The outraged war-horse was astounded and rose in the air on its hind legs, nearly removing the war-lord ; and H.I.M. leant precariously over, on the off side of his horse's neck.

This was undoubtedly not too good, and I well remember now the strained silence, with the exception of tittering in the ranks which greeted this obvious *faux pas*.

Any enthusiasm our German Emperor may have had for this inspection had indeed been wiped out with C——'s shot. H.I.M. demanded forthwith, in his rage and damaged dignity, that C—— should be expelled from the school. This request, although graciously received by Dr. Warre, the Headmaster, was not to be granted. It was not likely to be, even supposing C—— was not our promising and future left-arm round bowler for the Eleven, which indeed he became.

Somewhat eagle-crestfallen and still smarting, H.I.M., so I am told, on return to his lodgings in Windsor Castle, repeated his request to Queen Victoria to have the offender C—— sacked from the school. But his grandmother only replied, 'Don't be silly, Willie.'

After which Willie knew *his* last shot was fired."

The ex-Kaiser wrote at some length in reply to my account in *The Times*.

His Majesty for years had scarcely been heard of ; it was like a voice from the tomb. He wrote through his chamberlain, as follows :

"HAUS DOORN,

May 16th, 1933.

Lord Chamberlain's Office.

I am instructed by His Majesty the Emperor to convey to you his thanks for your communication of the 12th instant, and to send you, in accordance with your expressed desire, the following more accurate account :

'His Imperial Majesty still remembers quite clearly this most entertaining incident (summer, 1891), described in the Eton

College Chronicle. His Majesty is thus the more amused to hear how in the course of years fertile imagination has mingled fact and fiction.

Naturally in visiting a college His Majesty was not in full-dress uniform, but in the Prussian uniform usual for inspection, viz. tunic, shoulder straps, helmet; as were the officers of his suite.

After riding down the lines, His Majesty took his position near the right wing and not opposite the centre of the Volunteer Battalion, with the English and Prussian officers of his suite partly behind His Majesty, but for the most part opposite the front of the Battalion.

When during the manual exercises the shot went off, His Majesty's horse did not shy. It was His Majesty's own horse brought over from Germany, accustomed to manœuvres, rifle shooting practice and artillery fire: it stood quiet. The English horses ridden by the English officers and the Prussian suite seemed less used to gun-fire. They were startled, particularly those opposite the front line, reared up and brought their riders, unprepared as they were, and at first hardly able to keep their saddles—into very uncomfortable but somewhat humorous positions.

His Majesty was extremely amused at this "schoolboy" joke and was laughing about it with his suite during the ride back to Windsor.

At lunch the Emperor told the story to the Queen, his grandmother, and the other relatives who were present, amid much laughter, which was renewed when an officer of the English Staff announced that the youthful delinquent was C—. Before the inspection he had made a bet with a friend he would fire off a blank cartridge.

At the end of the amusing article in the Eton Chronicle the writer lets his imagination run riot. His Majesty was of course very far from being angry with the young culprit, and did not dream of asking the Queen or Headmaster to inflict punishment.'

His Majesty has enjoyed reading the account of the amusing incident, a regular Eton boy joke.

(Signed) M. DOMMES,
Lord Chamberlain."

I received many letters on the subject ; one from New York telling me that every word I wrote on the subject of the inspection was true : the writer was present at the parade.

An old lady wrote and said that His Majesty's horse nearly fell on top of her. The Rev. S. R. James, my old tutor, wrote to *The Times* :

"The account of the Kaiser's Inspection of the Corps in July 1891, is accurate enough up to the last two paragraphs. Then my old pupil is not correct.

I was at the time Second in Command of the E.C.R.V., and gave the 'fatal' order which nearly resulted in the unhorsing of His Imperial Majesty. My recollection is that, so far from demanding C——'s expulsion, he actually asked for an extra week's holiday for the school. Let us do him that much justice."

A. A. Somerville, Member for Windsor, also wrote to *The Times* as follows :

"Sir, in *The Times* of to-day we learn from —— that the Great War may have been caused on the Playing Fields on which Waterloo was won. His letter sent me to look again at a large photograph of the German Emperor riding along our line at the Inspection of the Eton Corps on July 6th, 1891, of which —— writes :

I was one of the subalterns on parade, and I well remember the struggle in the ranks between merriment and dismay when Private C—— inadvertently fired a blank cartridge at His Imperial Majesty.

It would indeed have been a cricket calamity if Dr. Warre had yielded to the alleged request of the Kaiser that Private C—— should be forthwith expelled from the school.

In 1893 Private C—— got eleven wickets in the Winchester



MY FATHER AND MOTHER (*standing*)



WINSTON CHURCHILL

HON. LEI DHION

B. H. H. COOK

match, and four *v.* Harrow at Lords. In 1894 he got seven wickets *v.* Winchester, and at Lords he got thirteen Harrow wickets and made 32 runs. He followed up his cricket successes by notable achievements in History at Oxford; and it is remarkable that he did not put on record, so far as I know, the answer given by H.M. Queen Victoria, quoted by —, to her august grandson, ‘Don’t be silly, Willie,’ when her outraged relative requested her to order the expulsion of Private C——.

I can only suppose that he took deeply to heart the comment of his tutor (E. C. A. L.): ‘I am grieved to hear, C——, that you have made an attempt on the life of the Kaiser.’

(Signed) A. A. SOMERVILLE.”

WINDSOR. *April 22nd.*

In answer to the ex-Kaiser’s letter, I wrote to Doorn :

“DEAR SIR,

With reference to the answer the ex-Kaiser has thought fit to have conveyed to Eton, on the subject of His Imperial Majesty’s visit to that school in 1891, the writer of that story would wish to express to H.I.M. his deep and respectful appreciation of the graciousness of the reply.

The accuracy of the story is perhaps here and there not absolute. But whatever impression the yarn may have conveyed, it is a satisfaction to realize that H.I.M. sees in it only fun; for no ideas of disrespect were intended.

The reply received from Doorn is one more evidence of a generosity of spirit and broadmindedness, which the writer, as a member of the Inter-Allied Commission in Germany after the War, repeatedly encountered among people of all classes in your country.”

We went to Dinard again in 1894 when I was seventeen and had left Eton. During these holidays I was given a second-hand bicycle.

So pleased was I with this magnificent gift, that I resolved

on a long ride. I travelled alone from Dinard in the north of France to Cannes in the Mediterranean, a distance of 870 miles. (The Cevennes Mountains I crossed by train.)

I bought a black cape to wear, as worn by the French *gendarmier*, and carried a small revolver. I was dressed in a Norfolk jacket and knickerbockers and stockings. Except for the rather sinister cape I could not be mistaken for anyone but an English youth. I passed through : Fougères, Mayeane, Le Mans, Tours, Loches, Chateauroux, Chateaufort, Montluçon, Clermont, Brioude, Le Puy, Valence, Montelimart, Oranges, Avignon, Salon, Marseilles and Le Luc.

All these towns witnessed the appearance of the shy Englishman in the Norfolk jacket (which incidently was a cast-off of Windbags' prize pupil, my brother).

Thus on a second-hand bicycle and in my brother's second-hand suiting, I crawled over the face of France.

At one isolated inn, in the hill near Montluçon, mine host told me that no Englishman to his knowledge had ever passed this out-of-the-way spot before.

So great was the interest in this visitor that at *petit déjeuner* next morning the whole household sat in a row in the tiny room to see the stranger at his meals. The stranger could talk French, indeed at five years old I could probably talk French more fluently than English.

At an even more remote inn in the mountains near Brioude, on retiring to bed, I missed a ten-franc gold piece from off the dressing-table ; I rang the bell and, dressed in a night-gown, ordered the entire household to parade in my room. The household consisted of the innkeeper in a very short nightie, his frowsy wife and a maid—the only other member of the staff ; and this party appeared before me. Nonchalantly waving my small revolver up and down the line of the three cringing forms I accused them of having robbed me. All three spoke at once and their language was far from pleasant.

Eventually I cleared the room and barricaded the door with every piece of furniture I could handle, including the bed.

Next morning after being called I found the ten-franc piece on my table. But whether it was put back when I was called, or I mislaid it overnight, I never knew.

I remember my departure next morning was a distinctly chilly one.

Next day I was chased by stray dogs on the road, and riding full speed on my rather tired bicycle I leant recklessly back and fired my revolver to the rear at my pursuers—six shots a minute. At the sixth shot I myself shot over the handlebars into a duck pond to the astonishment of the curs who had started the fun. Not too good this !

In just over two weeks I arrived, somewhat worn out but cheerful, at Cannes. Here I met many friends. I was introduced to the Grand Duke Michael and his wife, the Meysey Thompsons, the fascinating Jeanne de Fougères ; and met our old friends the Spencer Chapmans, Marie Graves, the Stapletons and Colonel Woodward, founder of the golf club at Cannes.


CHAPTER III

ON THE STAGE

WINSTON CHURCHILL—TROUBLE AT THE EMPIRE—H.R.H. PRINCESS CHRISTIAN
—THEATRICALS AT BEMBRIDGE—ROGER QUILTER—PLAYS OF OLD
DAYS

And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part ;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the persons down to palsied age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage,
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

WORDSWORTH.

HE first of the two brothers to appear on the stage was my platinum blond brother at the age of seven, when, with his curly locks down to his shoulders, he appeared at a concert playing with some vigour such intricate pieces as the "Merry Peasant," etc., on his tiny violin.

Later, having a good ear for music, and a rather unusual memory for music-hall songs, as he grew older he would return from the Pavilion or Tivoli and play on the piano and sing perhaps a dozen of these ingeniously worded songs, such as "The Comforts of a Home," "Coffee full of Flies, cheese that never dies," etc., to the great joy of my mother, who, if slightly shocked on occasions, easily survived it and cheered him on.

At Sandhurst he and Winston Churchill arranged a concert in which my brother impersonated Albert Chevalier and Gus Elen with the greatest skill. The costumes, gestures and general acting were executed to perfection.

I remember how kind Churchill was to me, a boy of fifteen, sitting with me at this concert, explaining the different items on the programme, which he had arranged.

Winston Churchill, then a cadet at Sandhurst, often accompanied my brother to London during week-ends, and occasionally lunched at our home.

Churchill was President of the Board of Trade in 1908, Home Secretary in 1910 and First Lord of the Admiralty in 1911.

At this time a well-meaning and pure-minded old frump, Mrs. Chant by name, thought it her business to cleanse the music-hall world by having the promenade at the Empire closed. (Irritating of course to the general public, who met their somewhat distinguished and flashy female friends in its corridors.)

Eventually when Mrs. Chant had sounded her horn loud enough, the L.C.C. ordered the promenade to be closed for good, in papier mâché.

Two fair-haired youths were by chance at the Empire that night. One you might have recognized as the once golden-haired and perfectly behaved pupil of one Windus or "Windbags."

The other was our future Minister, Winston.

Winston Churchill rose to this unique occasion with no hesitation, and took a neat header through the papier mâché, followed briskly by his confrère and a cheering crowd, who poured back into it.

The position was easily taken and the promenade once again came into its own—if only for a brief period.

It is true there was very nearly an ugly ending to the night's good work, for the Sandhurst cadets. My brother was now seated in a hansom cab with his colleague Winston Churchill, the latter addressing a packed London crowd from the platform of the cab where the two leaders had been deposited in safety by a friendly mob.

No doubt in this important speech from the cab, Winston

was emphasizing the fact that interference from the L.C.C. or the Home Secretary (which later on he was to become himself) could not be borne by free—very free on this occasion—citizens.

The *Pink 'un* next day muttered something of this escapade, but the two smart cadets from Sandhurst hardly read it.

The same week my father procured two tickets which gave us free entrée to the Empire as reporters. On this important mission I thought it better to appear older looking than my actual age. So I donned my father's bowler, a large size overcoat, and spectacles on the nose.

In our dignity as reporters we took our seats second row from the orchestra. We had hardly been seated three minutes when to my amazement (but not to my brother's) we were whirled out of the theatre into Leicester Square. Not too good this!

The chucker-out had recognized the fair-haired boy of the previous night. So that was that and we reported nothing that day.

The Eton Wick requested my brother and me to help to entertain in the East End with songs and dances.

My brother always says that before this entertainment the Royal Family had never really had a ticking off.

H.R.H. Princess Christian most kindly offered to accompany the songs on the piano. And when H.R.H. played over the airs for me, I found fault with her time, etc., and ticked her off properly. However, she was sweet and kind and thoroughly amused, I was told, trying over again and again the song and dance until I was satisfied. Later we had supper in a cellar and H.R.H. enjoyed sitting next to my brother, who was dressed as a nigger with a cork-blackened face.

At a memorable entertainment at Bembridge, Isle of Wight (1891), we danced and sang and were so pleased with our performance that we wrote our own account of it afterwards in the local paper. Four of the charming and attractive daughters of Colonel Moreton took an active part.

The report read as follows :

"The Misses Moreton next displayed their skill in step dancing, which was rapturously applauded. Songs and dances followed each other in rapid succession. 'The Dandy-coloured Coon,' sung by B. Cooke in truest imitation of Eugene Stratton, was heartily received, and the dancing by M. Cooke fairly took the audience by storm. The fun ran fast and furious, the interest never flagging."

The fun was chiefly for the actors.

It is possible that my greatest hit was at Henley-on-Thames at a "fashionable Primrose League entertainment."

As a spook, I sprang through a trap-door to the accompaniment of a clattering of fire-irons which were hurtled to the floor behind the scenes by my uncle, Colonel Rhodes.

But all the time at this show I was nervous because the only lady I loved, aged fifteen, was sitting in the front row, and I did not think my antics on the platform were up to her form. She had already told me in confidence, and in the sweetest way, that she thought I was a damned ugly fellow, or words which conveyed this simple truth. This was not encouraging; and later on in life her decision on the subject of my face remained unaltered.

On January 16th, 1892, I made my first appearance on the stage at the age of fourteen at Cosford, Suffolk. I sang "Norah, I do adore her," and executed a comic (or supposed to be comic) dance entitled "Ally Sloper" to a large audience.

Roger Quilter, the composer, at the same age (we had both just gone to Eton) sang "Clementina" and played the violin with much feeling. Lady Quilter brought a large house party out from Hintlesham Hall to cheer us on.

Last week, forty-one years after that performance, Roger Quilter came down to Eton and accompanied his nephew, young Vivian, on the piano at the school concert, and the boy sang one of his uncle's charming songs.

At Dinard, on April 27th, 1895, we got up a burlesque. I

had words again with the orchestra, which, as regards my songs, was not up to standard until I had rated them.

In this very ambitious burlesque *Aladdin* I was lucky enough to take the part of "Pekoe," since one of my jobs was to kiss the Princess, the lovely Muriel Paget, to the annoyance of the rest of the male party.

I danced an elaborate dance in black tights, and sang "I lub a lubby girl" (I "lubbed" a good many in those days).

My brother was a great success as the "Vizier," dressed fore and aft in cushions, which rendered his appearance enormous, for he was six foot in height. A bald head with a fringe of hair round the base, false and swelling cheeks and a merry, turned-up red nose, completed his somewhat striking appearance.

In this get-up and with half a dozen beautiful ladies on either arm, he swung forward singing "A Mighty Millionaire," a popular song at this time in *The Shop Girl*.

Whilst cramming in London I had attended lessons in every sort of comic dance given by Will Bishop, then the premier comic danseur at the Empire.

My brother and I received encores during the burlesque, and the account in the *Ladies' Pictorial* (April 27th, 1895)¹ read:

"The comical make-ups and clever songs and dances of the brothers, fairly brought down the house."

In 1893 at Dinard we brothers gave a performance ourselves, and entertained the audience afterwards with supper. I remember it was very successful.

Countess Hatzfeldt, the Berkely Pagets, Chetwynds, that curious character Oscar Wilde, Fitzroy Chapman, Hélène Chapman (now Lady Windham), Lady Victoria and Lord William Manners, Vicomtesse d'Anglemont, Jean de Grand-maison, de Schrieber, Comtesse de Pierrefeu, etc., came to the show.

My godmother, Mrs. C. D. Rose, took us each year to the Christmas pantomime at Drury Lane. The first pantomime I

¹ This was the year (1895) that Captain Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French Army, was degraded and falsely accused, an innocent man.

saw was *Sindbad the Sailor*, in 1880, when I was three years old. Nellie Power was "Sindbad," and the cast included Vesta Tilley, Arthur Roberts and James Fawn.


It is strange to think that my brother and I, schoolboys in the 'nineties, were allowed such freedom in our Victorian home. In London in the holidays he and I were continually speeding off to join a queue in the streets for a half a crown seat in the pit, or even a bob's worth in the gallery, for any play we thought worth seeing: *Ruy Blas*, *Cinderellen up too late* at the Gaiety; at the Princess' in Oxford Street to see Wilson Barrett in the *Silver King*, with his betrayed girls lying in deep snow; the drama at Drury Lane where the Derby was run on the stage, and ships wrecked; the melodrama of Terriss at the Adelphi; the opening night at Daly's Theatre where Marie Tempest, after an absence from the stage, appeared in *An Artist's Model*, its first night; at the St. James' where George Alexander, Herbert Waring and Evelyn Millard acted in *Prisoner of Zenda*, and *Rupert of Hentzau*.

All the fun of the true music-halls with Charles Godfrey, "Fighting with the Seventh Royal Fusiliers"; Charles Coborn with his "Two Lovely Black Eyes," and "The Man that broke the Bank," etc.; Bessie Belwood, John Nash, Marie Lloyd, Lottie Collins, Albert Chevalier, Dan Leno and Herbert Campbell, with an audience to enjoy their songs as patriotic in heart as many of the songs were to which they listened.

CHAPTER IV

THE MILITIA

THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT—WELSH MINERS—LORD RAGLAN—CRAMMERS—
FATHER BERNARD VAUGHAN—SHOOTING AT BISHOPSWOOD.

N July 6th, 1894, the Commission arrived appointing me to the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineer Militia, signed by Queen Victoria and Lord Lansdowne.

I was now in my seventeenth year, a full-blown officer in command of men, and wearing a crimson uniform.

This was the fifty-eighth year of our gracious Queen's long and splendid reign. I was destined to wear the uniform of three Sovereigns in my twenty-seven years' service.

My uncle's county regiment, chiefly made up in personnel of Welsh miners and employees of the officers of this famous and twice royal corps, was an historical one.

The castle at Monmouth and drill grounds were owned by the Duke of Beaufort, the honorary Colonel, who often stayed at Troy House, his property near there.

His son Lord Edward Somerset and his nephews Lord Raglan and Granville Somerset, both old Footguardsmen, served in the regiment. Lord Raglan, late Under-Secretary of State for War, was my Captain.

Amongst other well-known figures in the corps were Joe Bradney, Lord Southwell, Captain Greene Wilkinson, Charles Bathurst (afterwards Lord Bledisloe, Minister of Agriculture), Courtenay Morgan (the late Earl Tredegar), and his cousins Forestier Walker and Morgan and George Lindsay, Kemys

Tynte (afterwards Lord Wharton), Colonel Vaughan, brother of the Cardinal, and Bernard Vaughan commanded the regiment, to be succeeded later on by Colonel Edward Curre, the Master of Hounds at Itton Court.

Lord Raglan, who I loved and saw often in after years, seemed to me like a giant in his six feet four inches, with his huge bushy moustache.

He stood over my slender form on parade with his usual morning question: "Now, Mr. Cooke, what is the name of this man?" (I was responsible for recognizing the rugged faces of one hundred old toughs on parade.) They all appeared the same when that question was asked, and indeed most of them as far as I gathered owned the same name; at all events it was fairly safe to say: "John Jones the first."

"No, sir, damn you, it's John Jones the fourth," was the inevitable reply. David Davies was the other catch.

Raglan had an uncanny memory for names. Added to this he could quote from memory pages of poetry. He knew, for instance, by heart every poem in *The Ingoldsby Legends* from cover to cover.

How they loved their Captain and grinned when I failed with their names; and how they drank, the old scoundrels; the air was positively alcoholic for hundreds of yards round my company on parade. Many of the men could not talk one word of English, but knew the words of command.

We lived like fighting cocks in the Mess where the cooking and wine were perfection. Every article on the long shining table was old and priceless.

I do not ever remember insobriety in that splendidly appointed Officer's Mess, but the older hands drank well and deeply of champagne and old port for dinner, and red wine for breakfast, a relic of old times.

These Welsh miners arrived for their annual training most poorly clad, for miners in those days were not well paid, and their splendid physique was not apparent until they had donned the Queen's uniform. The pathetic soiled civilian clothes they

arrived in at the castle were seized upon by the Quartermaster-Sergeant, put in store, and cured with strong disinfectant.

At the end of the training they again robed themselves in their, for the most part, disreputable clothes ; and the spectacle of those splendid specimens of manhood, so poorly clad, walking down that sinister street of Monmouth on their way back to the coal mines, filled me with depression.

Their holiday for that year was over.

During our camp training in 1894 Colonel Stewart, commanding Western District, inspected the gallant Monmouthshires.

At the march past on the word " Eyes right " all eyes clicked to the right and were fixed, *not* on the inspecting officer, but on the lovely Connie Gilchrist who sat on the Duke of Beaufort's coach at the saluting base ; Colonel Stewart was forgotten.

She had driven over from Troy House with the house party which included Lord Orkney, whom she afterwards married.

The fascinating Connie Gilchrist was at that time a famous danseuse of light opera.

Once at dinner and the port was going round, Lord Edward Somerset said to me : " I was at the ball at Blenheim at which your mother came out. She was very lovely and I danced with her. The Prince of Wales was there (King Edward VII), and I remember he asked who the lovely girl was I was dancing with." It was nice of him to tell me this.

How sweet she must have looked with her *petite* figure, in the flounced dress of that day, her bare shoulders and graceful neck and lovely features, which were always lovely till the day she died.

My third daughter resembles her ; from a picture and photographs I have seen, she must have been like Jenny at her present age, eight years.

Say I'm weary, say I'm sad ;
Say that health and wealth have missed me ;
Say I'm growing old, but add—
Jenny kiss'd me !

LEIGH HUNT.

One evening in August, 1896, Lord Southwell and I rode over from Monmouth to Courtfield, ten or twelve miles distant.

Courtfield, the home of the Vaughans, lies in the woods high up above the swift-running waters of the River Wye which at this point curves sharply in a westerly direction and partly surrounds this ancient and secluded mansion.

This family, of Roman Faith, has resided there for five hundred years. Henry V, born at Goodrich Castle near by, was nursed as an infant at Courtfield.

Towards the end of our long and beautiful ride over hill and dell, the summer evening broke into a severe storm, and as we approached Courtfield torrents of rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning, added gloom to the somewhat sinister woods surrounding the house.

We dismounted from our horses soaked to the skin.

The two brothers, Colonel Vaughan and Father Bernard Vaughan, were that evening alone at Courtfield, and they pressed us to stay the night.

At dinner Colonel Vaughan sat at the head of the long table and I sat on his right, opposite Father Bernard Vaughan and Southwell. Presently our host called out to the butler: "Bring in the heretic's meat." It was a Friday. I was, of course, the heretic.

The two brothers were charming and amusing. Father Bernard was noted for his wit in the pulpit or in conversation; esteemed by his King, and a notable figure in Society.

Bernard Vaughan on one occasion travelled up by train to Wigan to attend some important ceremony. In the same carriage, a full one, there sat a very unpleasant traveller who in every way made himself objectionable. At last he got out and moved up the platform. Bernard Vaughan put his head out of the window and called to the man: "You have left something behind in the carriage." The man hastened back, looked in at the window and asked what it was he had left: "A very bad impression," said Father Bernard.

In the woods on the opposite and left bank of the Wye was

Bishopswood, the home of Captain Walter Partridge, an uncle of mine by marriage. He was a wonderful organizer as a soldier or in anything he took charge of. The Bishopswood shoot, in which as a youngster I had often taken part, with my twenty-bore gun, back with the beaters, was celebrated for its high-flying pheasants and for the organization of the shoot in every particular.

Some of the best shots of the day, including the brothers Rimington Wilson, were invited to shoot the Bishopswood coverts. Harry McCalmont owned the shooting, and my uncle ran it.

I remember that once in the three days' shoot the bag with six guns totalled just over four thousand pheasants. And again on another occasion, with six guns and shooting cocks only, in one day these brilliant shots brought down just over nine hundred, mostly rocketing, pheasants.

Often did I see a "gun" take his two birds in front, change guns and bring down two more disappearing birds behind, stone dead.

There were scarcely ever hot corners, but the pheasants flew high and strong above the woods, to crumple up to guns in position far below in the valley.

Harry McCalmont was a millionaire, well known on the Turf and owner of "Isinglass," Derby winner, 1893, etc.

The birds at the end of the day were literally stacked on the lawn, and later despatched to Ross; then distributed to railway men of the Great Western Railway at every station up to London, each porter receiving a brace of pheasants.

After I left school, and when still in the Militia, my father and mother, as a result of long deliberation, broke the news as gently as possible to their second son that it would be advisable for him to enter Her Majesty's service and become a regular soldier. It was therefore necessary for this to "cram." In other words to force the grey matter or brain with various confusing subjects in as short a period of time as possible.

As we were at that time at Dinard, they coaxed me to enter a crammer's at St. Servan.

The town, which lies inside the bay of St. Malo and at the mouth of the River Rance, is an ancient smugglers' resort, as before mentioned. Its history is, I feel sure, a sinister one. Its narrow, *pavé* streets are flanked each side by houses only imagined, for high walls, green with age, are careful to keep their secrets hidden.

Nuns, priests and pirates or children of pirates are the sole inhabitants of these mean by-ways, and these are only met, or rather passed, under cover of dark.

A few English are known to inhabit this picturesque, old-world backwater, but like the water rat, they are shy and very, very poor. The sanitation of this forgotten seaport is essentially French; indeed I do not remember any sanitation. The open drains are positive torrents on rainy days, sluggish and even more unpleasant in sunny weather.

It was to this far from exhilarating city of the dead past that I set sail from the Dinard cale to cross over the bay.

Winterbottom was one of many crammers living in St. Servan. The château (in which I was to exercise my brain) could boast of only one view and that one upon marshes which partly surround St. Servan, and into which moist meadows all the drains of the town appeared to assemble. This was the outlook from my bedroom window.

It was not a full house. There were six other youths besides myself, cramming. The six left no impression on me, the crammer himself left no impression on me, and at the end of fourteen days, in this atmosphere of extreme depression, I announced to the astonished crammer that I had decided to go home.

I remember Mrs. W.B. making a speech from the doorstep to my departing form; and whilst the disreputable old *cocher* endeavoured to coax his cab-horse into the breeching, and to get a move on, I heard the end of her despairing address delivered from the top step: "At all events I wish you good luck in

whatever career you take up." There was something kind and pathetic in this farewell, reminiscent perhaps of the Salvation Army.

Arrived at Dinard, I remember walking up the hill with my brown bag, my mother's astonishment at seeing the prodigal's return, her roars of laughter.

So much for cramming.

My father pretended to take this parting from the crammer seriously, but ended by breaking into guffaws of merriment.

Winterbottom arrived a few days afterwards to endeavour to persuade my father to entice me back to that gloomy château, without result.

But cramming was not yet over.

It was decided that I should go to "Jimmy's," in Lexham Gardens off the Cromwell Road, and so prepare the brain for service in the Rifle Brigade, for I was on the Duke of Connaught's list for that select regiment.

My brother and Winston Churchill had already sampled "Jimmy's." Captain James, late R.E., of Lexham Gardens, was a well-known crammer, and his establishment was recognized as being a favourite channel for ushering young and promising officers into Her Majesty's many and varied regiments, packed with knowledge.

My brother, Windbags' prodigy, had cleared all before him and was now a smart and smirking cadet at Sandhurst; so that he and Winston were already swanking round Camberley in their forage caps and tight overalls when I was being introduced into "Jimmy's" institute for budding army officers.

Jimmy was, or rather he endeavoured to look, a dignified figure, and he had good reason to throw out his narrow chest as the *crème de la crème* of London crammers.

On one occasion Winston Churchill had an altercation with the French master on the first-story landing. It ended in a wrestling match. During the fracas Winston caught sight of Captain James, the dignified boss of Lexham Gardens, leaning over the banisters above. "I say, Jimmy, Monsieur — is

trying to throw me downstairs," he shouted in a hurt voice. Captain James, late R.E., was not pleased.

One morning whilst strolling up that wide and rather bewildering Cromwell Road on my way to "Jimmy's," I saw a section of Royal Horse Artillery tooling along in all their glory of gold jackets, polished harness and blue-black shining twelve-pounders . . . England's pride.

I remember resolving there and then that this magnificent branch of the Service would do for me. I little realized how absurd it was for me to ever even hope for such a prize.

Within three years I was tooling along at the head of my section R.H.A. in the streets of London. I was in it.

I worked for many weeks at "Jimmy's." It was July. The sun shone brightly in the streets of London. Inside that frowsy room a mathematical expert was endeavouring to drive silly problems into my thick head. To all the problems I could see in my mind but one solution: the blue sea off the rocks of Brittany called to me softly and incessantly. I forgot even the presence of the professor who bent over me with his endless numbers showing increase, decrease, by constant quantity.

The blue sea had called me.

Next morning I took boat from Southampton to Dinard. Again the prodigal arrived home with his brown bag. A warm welcome, as always, awaited me. Jimmy, his stuffy, dusty classrooms, hot atmosphere and hard stools, all receded for ever and were washed out of memory by the blue waters on Dinard *plage*.

CHAPTER V

ROYAL REGIMENT OF ARTILLERY

PEMBROKE DOCK—THE “JACKET”—PRACTICE CAMP ON SALISBURY PLAIN
—THE OLD “FIVE-NINES”—THE COLONEL

Is it so small a thing
To have enjoy'd the sun,
To have lived in the spring,
To have loved, to have thought, to have done ;
To have advanced true friends, and beat down baffling
foes; . . .

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

IT would seem that fun and rows would in future be the order wherever I happened to be in charge of anything.

In June, 1899, I received my second commission, this time in the Regular Army, and again signed by Her Gracious Majesty; and was posted to No. 25 Company R.G.A. at Pembroke Dock.

This year was the outbreak of the Boer War, this year also Captain Dreyfus was re-tried at Rennes and pardoned after more than four years' imprisonment.

A few weeks after joining, the colonel commanding Western District took it into his head to inspect the efficient firing of our heavy ordnance at this fort.

We were practising at targets out to sea in Milford Haven at a range of about three miles with 6-inch guns. Small sailing

vessels were foolishly converging on the area over which the guns were firing.

“Cease fire” was ordered on account of danger to the fishing boats. Only one more shot to go before lunch. I saw it was safe, and I knew that if we did not fire we should stick in this benighted fort all the afternoon, waiting for the range to clear, and lunch was ready.

I ordered the men to load, and while the timid sergeant was imploring me not to fire (as “cease fire” had been ordered) I shouted: “Fire the damn’ gun.” With a deafening roar the 6-inch delivered its monstrous projectile which sailed over the head of the Inspecting Officer, who was ass enough to cross the range in his launch at the very moment when I was thinking of lunch and getting rid of the last shot.

All the telephones rang, and my name was reported as having dropped the last brick. However, we had lunch, and the only fellow badly unnerved was the inspecting officer, who was glad to get home with a whole skin.

I was happy at Pembroke Dock, but after a few months I wrote to the War Office, against all known principles, to the effect that I had joined Her Majesty’s Forces to become a horse soldier, and had no intention of being stuck on a rock all my service.

I was informed that there were no vacancies in Field Artillery. I thereupon again wrote, pointing out that unless I was posted to the mounted branch of Artillery, I should quite unwillingly be obliged to resign my commission.

The fact that it was not possible for officers to resign in war time did not enter into my calculations.

It might be thought that this overwhelming news, that I threatened to resign, would considerably unnerve Sir Evelyn Wood, the Adjutant-General; and that the troops in South Africa would pack up and come home.

The fact remains that I received a wire from War Office: “You are posted to — Battery, Royal Field Artillery.”

So I won.

This was the beginning of a military career fraught with fun and friction.

In this first year in the Regular Army, 1899, I remember dining at the house of Herbert Gibson (Sir Herbert Gibson). At the dinner was a senior gunner, one of the old swearing lot, a distinguished, regimental soldier, tall and good looking and as hard as nails.

Amongst other thrilling events which had occurred in this officer's life, a 12-pr. gun had passed over his neck, at full gallop, and had broken it . . . the neck not the gun. Most ordinary mortals die when this happens, but Colonel D— easily survived although he suffered from a stiff neck.

Our pretty hostess of that evening had invited Colonel D— in order that he could meet the Adjutant-General and have the chance of persuading Sir Evelyn Wood to send him out to the war in South Africa.

There were five of us dining including my father and myself. Sir Evelyn Wood was said to be somewhat deaf, but on occasions his hearing was remarkably good. That night, whenever Colonel D—, in a persuasive voice, started to hedge in as regards South Africa, our Adjutant-General was stone deaf. Every time he thought the Colonel was making a request he turned a deaf ear and talked louder than his neighbour across the table to me and his hostess.

It was as good as any play.

We all saw through it. The Adjutant-General was not going to bestow gifts on anyone at a dinner-party.

At the end of the evening, Colonel D— entirely out-manceuvred by the deaf tactics, retired depressed and despondent.

Sir Evelyn, within a week, sent the Colonel out to the South African War. Those who came in contact with this wonderfully active little general realized how human and kind he was.

It was greatly due to cricket that I got my appointment to Royal Horse Artillery. In the summer of 1900, one year

after receiving my commission, having made a few runs for the Regiment which helped to win the match, Colonel Keppel Stephenson, a keen cricketer, commanding "X" Battery R.H.A., asked me as I reached the pavilion if I would care to be attached to his battery.

This resulted in my getting the much-prized "Jacket" the following Christmas, in which appointment, except for the necessary two years in R.F.A. on promotion to Captain, I was to remain practically all my service of twenty-two years in the Regular Army; although in the war I was necessarily doing duty with the New Army, Territorials, etc., for most of the four and a half years, and in Germany after the war serving on the Inter-Allied Commission of Control.

When Keppel Stephenson left, our strenuous captain and old Colonel Benjy Burton, both martinets, but sound, good fellows, thoroughly resented this unfledged subaltern getting his "Jacket" with no "shop" training; and with one year's service instead of the customary five years.

Ignorant and shy, I was the constant target for all abuse of these two who towered over me and rendered my life as a soldier almost unbearable.

Practice camp in the summer of 1901 was the turning-point at this critical stage. Long advances into action over the undulating downs of Salisbury Plain formed an important item each day of the four or five days' strenuous programme when battery leading, an art in itself, entailed concealment of guns and swift movements under the direction of the leader, himself riding perhaps half a mile ahead of his battery.

All the while the red-capped and red-taped umpires, ever on the alert, kept up a system of secret service to enable them to dock marks for mistakes at drill and even for unnecessary swearing, chiefly on the part of junior officers. On the second day, riding my beautiful mare *Bien Aimée*, we cantered over the plains with the guns. A staff officer rode full tilt at me, shouting: "Take command, your major is a casualty." My mare, startled at this unnecessary and clumsy horsemanship on the part of the

umpire, reared right up and over, rolling me into the soft down grass.

With an oath I rose to my feet and cursed the umpire, adding that I also, thanks to him, was a casualty.

Away on the horizon I was pointed out a line of infantry advancing, which I was commanded to engage with the guns. With grimness, born of constant bickering and bullying for months from my captain and colonel, I took full command of the situation with a set jaw and the temper of a devil. I had suddenly awakened at that moment, I always think, from a shy boy to man's estate.

Well for us that we change.
Well for us that the Power
Which in our morning prime,
Saw the mistakes of our youth,
Sweet and forgiving, and good,
Sees the contrition of age.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

I had never seen a field-gun fired before this practice camp. Under me I had a battery so splendidly disciplined and drilled that it only needed the correct word of command to execute it to perfection.

Over the hills the guns rolled in precise formation to gallop into action in perfect style. I barked out two ranges: "1800 . . . 2000." The first dropped short, the second over. What luck! "1900 . . . rapid fire."

With the swiftness and accuracy of disciplined gunners the six guns roared out their shrapnel. Shell after shell poured into what represented the hostile infantry. No. 6 gun for a few seconds, jammed. I cursed the subaltern in charge of the left section: "Get your b . . . y gun off." I cursed the staff officer who dared come near me. This was my affair, this was my day, we had demolished the enemy.

When the smoke cleared and "Cease fire" had been given, it was seen that the ridiculous target, having the appearance of

clothes drying on a line, was torn to shreds and the wire cut into a tangle.

At the conference afterwards, Colonel Alfred Parsons, the Commandant, presided. The "confab" was held on the plains, and a large gathering of officers formed a ring and squatted down to hear the words of wisdom. Each series was gone through. My series was belittled by Colonel Benjy Burton, who was asked to make his remarks on my performance.

I remember how mean I considered his verdict: "This officer did not follow the book; he did not verify the bracket and went too swiftly to 'Rapid fire'; Mr. Cooke swore at the left section officer quite unnecessarily."

Then the verdict of the Commandant, the All Powerful: "This officer was quick. The effect on the enemy was considerable. Although perhaps not strictly in accordance with the drill book, he carried out a successful series."

So I won.

Junior officers crept up and smacked me on the back: "Well done, old fellow."

How out of date the old busters all were; verify the range indeed. Quickness and accuracy of fire is what is wanted in Horse Artillery. Did they imagine that the advancing troops would mark time whilst the guns repeated their ranges at such a short distance, to make sure?

About that time a Colonel known as "Old Five-nine," so named on account of his caustic and crushing remarks to his juniors, helped to impede progress at practice camps. When the young section commanders were endeavouring to "Shoot their batteries," this absurd old man stood over them cursing at every word of command they uttered. So bewildering was all this interference to the officer, who at that time above all others wanted to be left to give orders and act on his own, that the result of this sheer bullying was often disastrous. How one longed to say: "Now, Colonel, please shoot the battery yourself and show us how it is done." How foolish he would have looked, and how monstrous the result would have been.

It is pitiful to think that many old officers were in those days blind to the fact that the officer in charge of his guns must be left to carry on by himself.

In later years as a result of experience as Range Officer and Camp Staff Officer, attending many practice camps and full of intense energy where observation of fire was concerned, I became a Camp Commandant. My one thought was to help and encourage the officer firing his battery ; the exact contrary to the "Five-nines" of old days, who must have delayed by years the progress of the efficient shooting of our batteries on the ranges.

These, to me, troublous days were not altogether unhappy days in the comradeship of the other two subalterns of the battery, C. R. Bates and A. E. Erskine, now Sir Arthur Erskine, Crown Equerry, both good fellows and first-class officers. Indeed, the strenuous captain I have mentioned, in later years became a valued friend and a brilliant and very conspicuous general.

These two subalterns in the battery, Cecil Bates and Arthur Erskine, were about nineteen years old, both sound and reliable. Bates, with his clear brain, could argue on any point with anyone, the points of a horse or the anatomy of any gun. Slight and tall, this youthful officer would air his views somewhat heatedly, showing the whites of his eyes ; his stammer during any argument would help rather than impede, in emphasizing the point . . . generally a good one. He would point a finger to press the matter home ; and if his two brother subalterns were not always as convinced as he might wish, at all events they were impressed with his enthusiasm. But he was not argumentative by nature.

Of the three subalterns, I was, of course, the mug of the party. I was fond of these two who were capable and efficient, and loved by their men.

It seems now that though intensely interested and keen as a gunner, I was in the hustle and bustle of this strenuous soldiering chiefly a looker-on.

This wave of brain work by which I was surrounded with the "shop" trained officers, impressed me without actually aweing me. At practice camp so many calculations required in order to hit the target would have confused me had I attempted to enter that world of mathematics. I was content to see the target and fire the gun. How the shell reached its objective and why the shell ever left the bore were matters for experts, as far as I was concerned, at all events in those early days.

I remember in later years a senior gunner officer arriving at practice camp. He was a gunnery expert, head lad at Shoebury, the school of gunnery. He brought his battery to the plains for its annual practice. On arrival his first consideration was a site in the camp for his lecture tent. Such details as men's lines, horse lines and gun parks were subordinate to this lecture tent.

As Camp Staff Officer I helped him to choose a site; it was not usual for battery commanders to bring lecture tents with them. Whilst at camp this officer lectured on gunnery, the effect of shell-fire on various targets, and the best method of ensuring a knock-out on any target presented.

When this expert in figures himself took part in observation of fire, firing his own guns, the result, we were dismayed to learn, was nil. This fellow who had written the drill book on how to fire guns, in other words the Headmaster, had scored a blank at his own game. The shell, in the confusion of theories and figures, had unwillingly, but repeatedly, struck Mother Earth instead of any target, or burst in the high heavens, blue sky-high.

Here was a pretty riddle presented to the Commandant, Chief Instructor of Gunnery and myself, who formed the committee of judgment on shooting at this particular camp. The god of teaching had scored a duck's egg, and here we were . . . to judge him. He had not qualified for a "Third."

For decency's sake, for the sake of prestige, and in the interests of the Royal Regiment, we gave him a "First" . . . with our tongues in our cheeks.

I was actually all this time longing to get out to South Africa, and one day in the absence of old Benjy, my colonel, I got two

days' leave and fled up to Edinburgh. I climbed the hill to Edinburgh Castle and asked to see Lord Fincastle. His adjutant, Adrian Rose, in the Blues, was an old friend to the extent of having in our infancy swopped and shared nurses. Fincastle was charming. I offered to go out and serve as a subaltern in his "Irregular Horse." Incidentally, the whole business was irregular as I had not been given permission to offer myself for service in South Africa.

Fincastle at once accepted my services. I was delighted. A telegram was sent to Benjy who was cooling his head in the Greek Islands. Back came a wire: "On no account can Lieut. Cooke go to South Africa." So that was that.

I had been willing, of course, to forfeit my "jacket" to go out.

I cursed Benjy and hoped he would drown off the Ionian Islands or wherever he was idling.

But what a loss to the campaign in South Africa . . . my absence must have been! And all this time Windbags' "hope" was wading through blood at Holland, in S.E. Transvaal: my brother was wounded whilst serving in General Spen's column.

I always understood, until I actually witnessed the event, that "frothing at the mouth" was merely a "mot."

I was serving for a short time under a colonel who frothed at the mouth when in a rage.

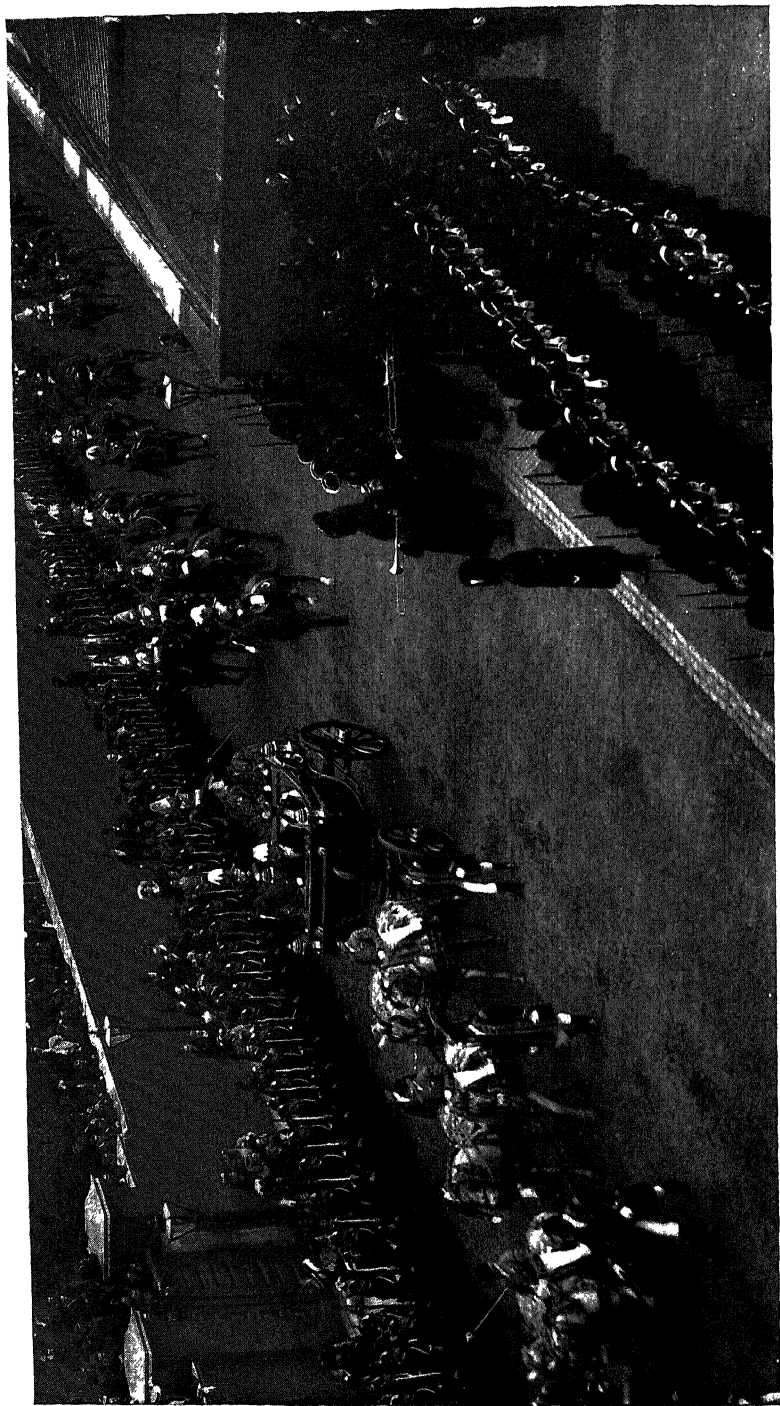
He was tall and good looking, with the complexion of an overripe plum. When he swore, he swore badly, sucking his rather prominent teeth between every word: "Where (suck) the Hell (suck) do you (suck) think you're going?"

I rather liked him, I kept off his ground, and he was careful not to step on my toes.

On one occasion a newly joined subaltern did the wrong thing on parade. The Colonel became puce in the face; he was terrible to look at, and he—*frothed at the mouth*. The young officer was so frightened that he ran and hid himself under a wagon until the thunder was over.



AT HENLEY REGATTA
H R H PRINCE OF WALES W DALZIEL MACKENZIE OF FARR



ROYAL PROCESSION, OCTOBER 25TH, 1902
KING EDWARD VII AND QUEEN ALEXANDRA, *mounted*, HIS PRESENT MAJESTY, H.R.H. DUKE OF CONNAUGHT

In the old days the leeches (so called on account of their only cure) bled these full-blooded gentlemen. I always wished they had bled our colonel. It would have cooled him down, stopped the sucking noise, and, if applied long enough—stopped him altogether.

But to turn to a very different personality, one loved and respected by all who knew him. Sir Charles Tucker, a great friend of my father. His language was always said to be fierce. Everyone and all ranks of the Army loved old "Bloody" Tucker. Even Lord Kitchener feared him if the old General was annoyed, but he was very fond of him.

At the end of the South African War Tucker telegraphed to the C.I.C. Kitchener for leave home to England. Kitchener, hardly daring to do so, refused. Back came a wire from Tucker : "Must have leave, going to be married, I'm a bit long in the tooth and she's no —— chicken." He got his leave, travelled back in the same ship with my brother, and married a very charming wife.

I met him soon after the Great War in my mother's drawing-room. I said : "Sir, there are more stories about you than anyone in the world." "Yes, my boy," he said, "and they are all b—— lies."

He was splendid to look at and always delightful to talk to. He is now, in 1934, ninety-six years old and in good health.

He wrote to my brother last Christmas year, from Biarritz.

He was born the year after Queen Victoria came to the throne, 1837, the year penny postage was introduced, 1838.

CHAPTER VI

EXAMINATIONS

THE ONLY PRIZE—A. C. BENSON—A TUSSE IN THE FINCHLEY ROAD—THE
DUKE OF TECK—YELLOW PERIL—COLONEL PHIPPS HORNBY, V.C.

Dr. Johnson :


That questioning is not the mode of conversation among gentlemen.

Dr. Johnson left Oxford without a degree.

The brilliant man who did not know and the learned man who did
not think met in the Second Class and disliked each other.

The poet sat in the third and laughed.

The nightingale got no prize at the Poultry Show.

XAMINATIONS were always somewhat of a trial
to me, and although I managed somehow in the end
to shuffle out of them, they sorely tried my thinking
powers.

The summit of my success was reached when, at the age of
ten at Park Hill, I won second prize for French, a beautifully
bound *Myths of Hellas*.

My mother's and father's joy knew no bounds, and it was not
until the joy and pride had subsided to a certain extent, months
later, that they learnt that the number of boys in that particular
class in which their second son had so distinguished himself,
totalled two . . . and I was second.

They were not so proud then. I always regretted that the
actual numbers leaked out. It was no good being cocky about
prize winning after that, particularly as I never got another prize.

In the meantime my brother mopped up anything there was
at Park Hill, and became in one year top of the school.

At Eton I was up to A. C. Benson. He was very tall with
kind blue eyes, and I can see now the pain gathering in those
patient eyes and the wrinkling of that broad, furrowed forehead,

as he read over my detestable Latin verses. Then he would look down on my small form and smile bitterly.

I think he always liked me in spite of my Latin, in which subject he was a great scholar ; and indeed my Latin must have been a revelation to him. I feel now, having read many of his lovely poems, that his thoughts were immersed in his own poetry and *not* in my Latin verses.

A soldier is always having exams.

When quartered in London, at some promotion exam., about seventy or eighty officers had to be passed in road sketching. Amongst the officers there were many Guardsmen and others, quartered in London ; and my brother, then in the Rifle Brigade, was also amongst the party.

All carried sketching-boards with this difference, that whereas everybody else used a small hand sketching-board, I had an enormous plane table.

The country to be sketched was somewhere up the Finchley Road. It took me about five minutes to set up this table. When, with infinite labour, this bugbear had been put on its legs in the middle of the road, a horse-cart would descend upon me and demand space to pass by. The abominable table would then with difficulty be moved to the ditch and again set up.

Whilst this complicated manipulation of screws was going on all the other candidates hurried past me up the road, including my brother, striding along with his long legs, muttering caustic remarks, such as : " Hello, you've got something there," until I was left quite alone still wrestling with the thing.

I did not win the race that day or even finish the sketch.

At another promotion exam. held in Bloomsbury, more or less the same candidates, Guardsmen and others quartered in London, took part.

One particular question in the examination paper puzzled me, and so, I gathered, mystified other candidates sitting near me. I promptly rose up from my hard seat and told the President, who happened to be the Duke of Teck, the Queen's elder brother, that I did not understand the question asked in the paper.

The Duke then read it out to me and I said : " And what, sir, is the answer ? "

The examiner, who sat next to the President, looked furious ; but the Duke firmly asked him what the answer was. The examiner was obliged to give me the answer ; so that was quite easy. I passed in that exam.

I saw the Duke of Teck laughing at my cheek as I sat down ; he struck me, of course, as charming.

At Woolwich, for promotion to captain, I again sat at a small table for examination on another hard seat. Exactly opposite me was another candidate. This officer was very dark, indeed, he must have had a touch of the tar brush. He was known in his regiment as " Yellow Peril " or the " Horrid Hindu," rather personal I thought.

I had not been immersed in my studies very long before I noticed that the Horrid Hindu expectorated on the floor ; and when this operation continued I was so disgusted that I rose up and refused to carry on with the good work.

The President, Colonel Phipps Hornby, V.C., seeing my discomfiture, walked over to my table to soothe me down. I refused to sit down again.

Phipps Hornby, who was perhaps the most charming senior officer I knew in my regiment, exhorted me to finish off the paper, i.e. mark in troops on the map with coloured chalks. This I did hurriedly whilst standing up, and left the room.

I must have had good shots with my coloured chalks, because I passed. The Horrid Hindu was left to spit his dusky way through the exam.

Whilst at Rawal Pindi a staff officer attached to Army Headquarters at Simla came and stayed at the bungalow in which Horace Webber and I lived. One of his jobs was to set papers for promotion exams. He consulted me as regards the questions to be given in the next examination paper for subalterns.

A few weeks afterwards I went up for examination and answered my own questions . . . and passed.


CHAPTER VII

CRICKET AND HUNTING

OLD SCORES—UNDER ARREST—HUNTGRUB—THE DRAG—SIR NOEL BIRCH—
DRIVING FOUR-IN-HAND—A GOOD WIN—HOCKEY AT WOOLWICH—
CRICKET WEEKS—SIR DOUGLAS HALL—TREDEGAR PARK—GLEN KIDSTON
—BALLYWALTER PARK—A. A. SOMERVILLE—HINTON ADMIRAL—THE
TEST

I see already the first ball twisting
Over the green as I take my stand,
I hear already long-on insisting
It wasn't a chance that came to hand.
Or no ; I see it miss the bat
And strike me on the knee, whereat
Some fool, some silly fool at point, says blandly : " How
was that ? "

A. A. MILNE.

T this time I played cricket for the Regiment, for the Free Foresters, I Zingari, Eton Ramblers and occasionally for the M.C.C., in which last I was elected member at the age of seventeen.

When being tested for "F.F." I played for them against Reading County, in which match I kept wicket as usual, for now I was a recognized wicket-keeper. During this, to me, important match, I received a wire recalling me to Woolwich to sit as member of a court martial. I wired back : "Impossible. Playing Cricket," and continued playing. I presume I played fairly well as I was given my colours at the end of the game.

The wire was not well received.

On return to Woolwich, our captain, to my mind then, an over zealous officer, placed me under arrest for absence.

I was confined to my room, and next day, minus cap and

sword, and looking a perfect idiot, was marched in between two officers before the Officer Commanding Woolwich District. Asked why I was absent from the court martial, I said I was very sorry, but knowing that if I had obeyed orders I should have lost my chance of being elected member of the Free Foresters, I had ignored the telegram.

As the much coveted appointment to Royal Horse Artillery had only lately been given me, I had indeed risked a bit.

The O.C. Woolwich District, a good fellow, smiled and patted me on the back, to my intense relief with the remark : " My boy, don't do it again."

So I won, but was even less popular with my captain than I was before I had committed this breach of discipline.

Once, attending a court martial at Woolwich, when dear old Keppel Stephenson had thirteen prisoners to be tried and we were hoping to get to Lords by lunch time for the Eton *v.* Harrow match, an old Scotch gunner, up for " drunk," addressed the court with a kind eye on the President : " Ye'll be wanting to get to the cricket, I plead guilty." He was let off very lightly.

At the age of nine I could ride fairly well and was hunting in the New Forest with Rawnsley who had five ponies at the school.

My uncle, Colonel Frank Henry, 9th Lancers, taught me all I knew about hunting at Elmstree, where I stayed as a boy and hunted with the Duke of Beaufort's hounds, of which hunt my uncle was Secretary for over thirty years : the stone-wall country of the Cotswolds.

In 1899 Major Burt, Riding Master in the Second Life Guards, instructed me in military riding, and I was finally passed out in riding at Albany Barracks by Lord Dundonald.

After this my life as a soldier was continually spent in the saddle, whether on parade or in the hunting field, hunting with any old pack.

In later years I was asked once to have a day's cub hunting in the New Forest. Colonel Huntgrub was my host for the day.

H. G. was much loved in the neighbourhood ; he was nearing eighty years old, a likeable old fellow with his merry, fat, genial face. He had hunted the best part of his long life and was shy of giving it up. He had a lovely home not far from the sea, and his farm inland, north of the Forest, to which he escaped from his family twice or three times a week for a run with the hounds, formed a base for his activities in the hunting field.

On a dark, dismal morning with a drizzle of rain to add to the depression, Colonel Huntgrub met me in his second-hand Trojan car. At the end of a twenty-mile nerve-shattering, bone-rattling drive through the entire Forest, we approached, towards daylight, this isolated farm down an incline of one in four, by a track frequented only by cows, forest ponies and pigs ; the track otherwise forming a mere overflow for rain-water in floods.

At the bottom lay the farm. This ancient and ramshackle building overlooked in its turn (for the land still stood on a high level) one of the great plains which border the north-west of the Forest.

The farm-house was superintended by a man and his wife, or rather they kept house there. The little thin man in charge was not a farmer, nor in appearance could he ever have been mistaken for one, and furthermore, beyond the garden there was no land to farm. He was a tiny fellow with a narrow chest ; in stature, what is known in the Navy as " the bum height of a duck." He wore pince-nez on the tip of his long, weak nose. His duties consisted in keeping fit and groomed, five hunters, to call in the cows from the Forest and milk them, and to feed all the animals and chickens. His buxom wife no doubt assisted.

Our sporting colonel told me in confidence, as regards the farm-hand, that during the war he had "picked him up cheap."

The entrance hall and sitting-room of the farm resembled the inside of a second-hand bookshop. Here chaos reigned. Floors were littered with old books, manuscripts and old prints which had to all appearance lain there for years, undusted.

On the stairs and overhanging the banisters one could see the Colonel's breeches, or rather his soiled leathers ; and on

the first landing a friendly pair of braces hung waiting for employment.

My host handed me a book of rare prints to study before he disappeared upstairs to don his hunting clothes. When he appeared again our huntsman resembled a rat-catcher rather than a follower of the New Forest Hunt; the stock tie spoke of havoc, the leathers were patched where the Colonel took his seat, the yellow waistcoat had lost two buttons and stains of coffee down the front reminded me that I had not so far breakfasted.

He had still to pull on his butcher boots and this proved to be a heavy task. The right-hand boot refused to pull up over the thick, grey sock and long winter drawers. Amidst groans of despair the old fellow tried every attitude, changing chair after chair in his efforts.

Once when he sat down I heard a pop, but at the time took little notice of it. Later, when it was time to leave the farm, I was to learn that in the struggle with his boots old Huntgrub had plumped on to my new bowler hat. It took me some time to recognize in that flattened out piece of felt, what had once been my Bond Street bowler.

He never knew of that accident, it was a mere incident in the day.

It was time to mount our hunters. A great raking, black-brown mare which stood sixteen-hands, possessing a very large head, was led out for me. She was a whistler with considerable musical powers, and I was to learn later that she was rising twenty-nine years and this accounted for the parrot mouth.

She stood over in front with her large hocks and head down, showing every rib. She carried a magnificent tail. Bog spavin, both forelegs fired, splint in the off fore and side bone, all had had their turn with this gentle-eyed lady, and none of these defections appeared to affect the sure-footedness of this gallant old quadruped. We moved off.

I felt that my crushed hat, at all events, matched the harness and the horse I bestrode. We, as a party, would not have cut a dash in the Shires.

Just before leaving, Huntgrub's son joined us. He was, to put it lightly, a ponderous fellow, six foot two in height.

Mounted on another steed, twin sister to mine in appearance (and only fit for the knacker's yard), his entry into the picture could only cause further depression. Over loose breeches and a black, ill-fitting coat, a torn aquascutum was worn unbuttoned, in the back of which a large rent hung down. Even the Colonel remarked on this: "Hello, Phil, you've torn your coat," as if this further addition to our unhappy appearance in general, mattered.

A short ride over the plain brought us to a boggy wood round which we whirled in the mud and wet overhanging branches, in pursuit of the fox.

We were back at the farm by 2 p.m. I remember I was hungry and longed for a tankard of ale. On a long table in the old farm kitchen the meal was spread. It was not a savoury repast. I forget what was set before us, I only remember now watching Huntgrub minor devour practically the whole of a rabbit, and my despair on being offered the choice of two drinks . . . a huge bedroom jug of milk and another of tepid lemonade.

The end of a perfect day.

In 1904 I was whip to the Regimental Drag Hunt for three seasons and, occasionally, Acting Master.

What stirring rides we had!

I came a great deal in contact with the farmers of Essex and Kent when arranging lines for a ride over their land. These farmers always welcomed us to their country. Of yeoman stock, this breed is perhaps one of the soundest in the land, the backbone of England; a race of man discouraged to-day rather than encouraged; simple people, hard workers, plain living, often deeply religious, and loyal subjects.

When I say the backbone of England I say so advisedly. There exist in our land men of humble life like these, country bred, town bred, who unknowingly are in their common-sense a veritable power.

These men are a standby; they provide the steady influence

in moments of danger, occasional crises, which our dear country, first Empire in the world, is bound to be confronted with.

When the proletariat or the diehard aristocrat, or indeed members of any new government in power for the moment, threaten chaos, we have always in reserve the measured, safe, middle-class backs to protect the goal. These men, conservative in mind, although not necessarily voting conservative, are an antidote to any exaggeration or any unsoundness which may arise.

But, to return to the merry hunt.

From "Bright was the morning."

Bright was the morning and the day fair;
High were the clouds that sailed the clean air,
The land was rich and the herbage fine
Under heaven—and the world was mine.

FRANK KENDON.

On one occasion during my tenure of office as Whip to the Royal Artillery Drag, the Kent farmers invited us to hunt a stag. The buck was carted to the spot in a van, and the hounds, a nondescript pack collected from the offshoots of many well-known hunts, sped after their quarry for most of the morning. Some members of the pack were perhaps not so perfectly bred as might be desired, and the scent on this occasion was strange to them. Nevertheless, these musical hounds were soon in full cry.

After a long and heated chase, during which many gallant followers were thrown from their "hairy" steeds, our stag, tired of running, came to a halt and faced its pursuers.

The hounds, which (to give them their due) had never before pursued anything more drastic than the runner's smell-bag, were to their utter consternation confronted by a live beast larger than themselves, with horns on its head. From a howling pack of bloodthirsty hounds they became, as if by magic, a cringing mob of cur dogs all wishing they had never taken part

in anything so risky as hunting such an animal as now opposed them.

Briefly, what promised to be a hunt of a high order resolved itself into a situation somewhat embarrassing to the Whips.

Before long I, as one of the Whips, blushing with shame like a schoolgirl, could have been seen whipping in a pack of hounds which contained in its midst a very friendly stag. We were, to our humiliation, obliged to officiate over these hounds which had become on amicable and intimate terms with their quarry.

Our procedure through Dartford on the home journey was only interrupted once by "Dreadnought," which disreputable hound darted into a butcher's shop and, despite the efforts of the Whips, dragged from off the counter a leg of mutton, and this (again to our utter shame) he exported into the street.

There was a very considerable "worry" in the High Street of Dartford, and these hungry hounds, with evident gusto, demolished the butcher's meat; the cries, whip-cracking and yelps adding zest to a lively scene in which the buck, mincing round the pack on its toes, completed a pretty but very hectic picture.

At this time I had lessons in driving four-in-hand. Curly Birch, afterwards Major-General Sir Noel Birch, took infinite pains to teach me, and with the assistance of Geoffrey White's technical book on driving (himself a past master with the ribbons), I became a keen whip, driving the Regimental coach on occasions in London, and once back from Ascot Races, etc.

Later on in Lucknow I won a silver cup at the Lucknow Horse Show in four-in-hand driving, when we defeated the Cavalry and Field Artillery teams.

I rode my lovely Irish mare "*Bien Aimée*" in many point-to-points, when quartered at Bordon, near Aldershot.

Riding at Petersfield, over a stiff four-and-a-quarter-mile course, "*Bien Aimée*" was struck behind and bowled over as I was taking off out of a plough. She lay full length in the plough. Was it worth while going on? The rest of the field, to the number of fifteen, looked already a quarter of a mile away. I

mounted and rode hard for it. A mile from home I was with the leading three: my lovely mare jumping cleanly, and taking her post and rails in beautiful style, brought me in winner by a length. She was splendidly fit. It was a great win!

At Woolwich I played polo, with Club ponies, when not playing cricket for the Regiment.

In the winter, when not hunting, I ran the hockey team. We were very successful, winning against Cambridge and many good London teams.

I always played half-back centre.

In 1906 I was offered the chance of playing for Kent, and then had to go to India.

Amongst the players at Woolwich were Ellershaw, afterwards Staff Officer to Lord Kitchener and drowned in the *Hampshire*; Hoare, Chaplain to the "Shop"; Philips, one time Captain of the Boats at Eton (and for this important post presented with the Jubilee Medal by Queen Victoria); Wingate, a cousin of the Sirdar, and Browning, Captain of the school at Eton.

At cricket, apart from wicket-keeping, as a batsman I played usually a defensive game, going in early and enabling the other bat to knock up runs. Occasionally I made a fair score, but was no great bat.

A few records of old matches remain with me now: 89 runs at Portsmouth, going in first; playing for my Regiment *v.* Hampshire Hogs, stumping four unfortunate opponents and catching another out at the wicket. Playing for Eton Ramblers against my Regiment in 1906 I knocked up 113 runs; and in another match 65 runs, and three catches at the wicket.

Batting for the Regiment against Portsmouth Garrison, and going in first, I carried my bat with 77 runs. I played several years running for I.Z. or Eton Ramblers on the lovely St. Cross ground, Winchester.

Once, playing at Lords for the M.C.C. against the Royal Regiment, I was bowled first ball to the delight of my brother officers, and I crawled slowly back to the pavilion, such a long walk, feeling like a worm.

At Dolgelly, in Wales, years ago I played in a village match with the local postman, policeman, the Squire and his dependents. I remember I bowled three wickets. It was the kind of cricket where the wicket-keeper in order to stop a swift ball to leg, usually turns about and receives it in the seat of his pants.

Good honest cricket with lots of chaff and back-chat.

From *Punch*.

CRICKET IN FRANCE

(Or little lessons for the little ones)

Maintenant Georges est dans.

Il marche au guichet, prend son chef de train milieu et jambe et affront le marchand de vitesse qui commence à bouler.

Georges ferme ses yeux et fleurit son bat.

Zut !

La balle vole au-dessus des têtes des deux glissades jusqu'au troisième homme qui est un mauvais champ.

"Doigts beurrés," caserne la foule.

Georges est ravi ; il a fait deux.

Il joue la prochaine balle dans la direction de couvert-souplementaire.

"Courez," il crie à Aristide, mais celui-ci est trop soufflé et ne bouge pas.

Pauvre Georges ! Il essaie à retourner mais se bouleverse.

"Comment ça ?" Appelle le garde-guichet.

L'arbitre élève son doigt.

Georges est couru dehors.

In 1903 Captain Frank Greene Wilkinson asked me to come and stay at Burton Hall, in Sussex, with a friend of his, Sir Douglas Hall.

His host proposed getting up a team to oppose an M.C.C. eleven near by.

I brought Trevor Lawrence, in my Regiment, to help in the cricket. H. Mordaunt skippered this gallant cricket eleven at Burton.

Quite six of the eleven collected never played cricket under any circumstances, so we presented a feeble enough side to play against Colonel M.'s team.

Beyond knowing Greene Wilkinson, Lawrence, known as "Lorenzo" or "Algy" on account of his immaculate clothes and his success with the ladies, and I knew no one staying at Burton, not even our host.

After dinner on the first night Lawrence and I started a bull-fight in the large and lovely panelled hall. Algy had a fur rug over his back, and I attacked him with ancient spears which hung on the wall. When the bull-baiting was at its fiercest our host, from an upstairs gallery, poured jugs of cold water down on us, to cool our ardour.

It was in this atmosphere of hilarity and high spirits that on the next day we drove to the scene of action where the cricket match was to be fought.

On arrival in the two-horse brake we were somewhat sobered at the sight of M.C.C. flags flying wherever it was possible to fly any colours; to see the rather fierce-looking owner of the ground, himself flying M.C.C. colours on his hat and round his waist; and dazzled indeed to see three M.C.C. pros. fresh from Lords, all bent on defeating our, as a whole, non-cricketing party.

This was the opening match, and Colonel M. had blasted rocks for five years in order to make the ground, and, by the looks of him, he had blasted a good deal in the making of it; but never had he, I feel sure, blasted more than when at the end of this memorable occasion, i.e. the great opening day of his ground, he was defeated by this frivolous team which had driven over from Burton Hall.

Algy, going in with one pad, knocked up thirty or forty runs; others, wearing no pads, scored heavily; and later, Algy and Green Wilkinson *would* put themselves on to bowl.

No one paid any attention to Mordaunt, our captain; and this undisciplined team, padless and fearless, licked the M.C.C. by twenty runs.

No one volunteered to cheer the victorious team. Colonel M. and his pros. had sulked. And well they might after a defeat by this disreputable eleven. So we stood up in the brake and

cheered ourselves heartily, Sir Douglas Hall beaming and proud of his visitors.

CRICKET WEEKS

What fun the cricket weeks were, now alas, with many beautiful country houses deserted, a dream of the past.

We toured in the West of England. The team touring in Gloucestershire stayed at Elmstree, my uncle's home ; at Badminton, the seat of the Duke of Beaufort ; at Westonbirt with its lovely gardens, the home of Sir George Holford, King's Equerry (now, alas, a girl's school or other institution).

In Wales, at Tredegar, where old Lord Tredegar, a veteran of the Crimea, put up the whole eleven. Here, in the evenings we closed round the piano and sang songs, and Courtenay Morgan, the late Lord Tredegar, helped in the music by whistling. Screwing up his mouth he emitted therefrom such airs as the "Double Eagle" in a shrill, pleasing whistle. And I was made to turn on with such sob-stuff as "Sunshine Above, Sunshine in my Heart." I sang in tune, and sunshine was indeed in my heart ; I was young, and life was glorious.

George Lamotte, one of the team and a talented pianist, always accompanied for us. This officer in later years was to distinguish himself in Palestine in the Great War.

Then we all sang choruses, with our dignified old bachelor host sitting at one end of the dark, panelled and lovely room, smiling at us.

We stayed at Cefn Mably, the home of the Kemys Tyntes, where each evening, in this beautiful house on the hills high above the River Severn, old K. T. jabbered in Welsh to his blind harpist, who tinkled each night on his harp behind a screen.

At Rushmore, which Glen Kidston had taken, a home amongst the Wiltshire Downs. Glen Kidston the good father of the brave, courageous and gallant Glennie, who, as a midshipman in H.M.S. *Heroic* at the Battle of Jutland, was torpedoed ; and later, with his fine English spirit of adventure in speed driving by air and car, eventually lost his life.

At that time he and his brother and three lovely sisters were tiny wees. Their mother, now Lady (Helène) Windham, I had known as a child. She was a gracious hostess, loved by all. Helène, or "the Duchess" as she was called, was, in addition to her natural charm and sweet face, gifted above her peers; and in the conduct of life in which ordinary mortals excel, whether at games or other pursuits, the Duchess was ever well in the first flight.

At Ballywalter Park, Ireland, the home of the Mulhollands (Lord Dunleath), where we numbered forty-two staying in this large domain; and here in this picturesque spot on the east coast of Ireland, I remember we played cricket each day until 5 p.m., then a tennis tournament, and before dinner a brief and lovely ride along the coast on ponies; after a bath, dinner and dancing until early morn—full days.

And I won the tennis tournament with the attractive daughter of our host, the prize a silver cigarette-case.

A. A. Somerville, now Member for Windsor, 1933, brought over a Free Forester team, and we beat them by three wickets. I made twenty not out, and a "duck," stumped one and caught another at the wicket.

At the termination of this glorious week I travelled with many members of the party and continued another week at Dereham, in Norfolk; our hostess, the lovely Mrs. Marshall Roberts, daughter of Sir George Murray and niece of Lady Dunleath. Donough O'Brien, Rex Hargreaves, Payne Gallwey, Reginald Coke, Wynyard, Hartley and Colonel Poore amongst others, played in the week.

At Hinton Admiral I stayed for several August cricket weeks with Sir George Meyrick, the old Master of the the New Forest hunt. The kindness and charm of manner of our host and hostess I shall never forget.

Here each year the whole Royal Artillery cricket eleven was put up, and I Zingari and Free Forester matches followed the home and regimental cricket; with a ball at the big house in the evening.

Hinton Admiral is beautifully situated on the edge of the Forest ; a lovely old mansion with a vista between beech woods looking south over Christchurch valley and the blue sea beyond, the cricket field lying in this broad avenue.

The present baronet, master of hounds like his father before him, played in the week in those days, a young officer of cavalry. F. E. Lacey (Sir Francis Lacey), the well-known and much-loved secretary of Lord's and old friend of my father, amongst others played there. This tall figure with the face of a good-looking Sherlock Holmes, batted with extreme sang-froid, calmly and evenly, sweeping the cricket ball clean over the beech trees out of sight, and having scored swiftly in a few overs, as calmly and methodically strolled back to the pavilion.

The bachelor quarters were in a wing of this E-shaped house. Just below one's bedroom-window an old wall ran the length of the wing. Peacocks, of which there were many, had a habit of strolling in the early summer mornings along this wall, and, with outstretched necks and with all the power of bird lungs, squawked through one's open window. The morning summons from these tactless feathered vertebrates left one exhausted and despondent ; their harsh cry reminded me of my old governess : " Why arn't you up ? "

On one occasion I rose out of bed, stood before the window in pyjamas, seized the first missile, my piece of soap, and buzzed it at the interfering peahen which had disturbed my slumbers. I little realized that many of the large house-party, from their various windows, had seen me fling my soap at the lady . . . at five in the morning. No doubt they also were disturbed in their dreams by the noise.

I remember being last down to breakfast. My hostess greeted me before the twenty breakfasters : " I trust you are well supplied with soap in your room ? "

So my early morning call was matter for public gossip.

I went up this year, 1934, to see the cricket at Lord's, England v. Australia.

On a big day like this the pavilion is filled, there are six thousand members.

I always mount the steps to this pavilion with mixed feelings ; I shall enjoy the cricket, I feel, but shall I enjoy the casual meeting of faces of bygone days ? Will this depress me, or will any joy come to me as I gaze at masks grown grey and grizzly, which I have known for countless years ?

Here is the test.

Inside those glass doors I shall see that cosmopolitan world of members, cricketers and non-cricketers, ranking from Royalty to a far lesser rank in the scales ; all interested more or less in the game, all qualified to wear a neck-tie of gold and red, and to sit in the world's headquarters of cricket.

The wielding of the willow, success at the wicket or in the field with that small leather ball, have levelled all in this pavilion. This English game of cricket has been the means of welding together with good understanding these thousands of Lord's members.

Here within the glass doors I see our King's son, an important Rajah, well-known county players, a famous actor, earls galore, some Cabinet Ministers and many brilliant soldiers and sailors.

I talk with friends who recall to me, in their turn, different periods of my life . . . the morning, afternoon and evening of my existence. I notice their figures and faces, and in many instances I am shocked and alarmed. In all this assembly, so happily met, one just nods and smiles and greets an old acquaintance or friend with "How are you ?" . . . and passes on : a day's pageant of life with just so much fleeting contact with these persons met by chance, as a bee may have with flowers settled on in his daily rounds . . . in your garden.

In the big windowed committee room sit the tin hats of M.C.C., the President Lord Hailsham, the popular secretary, Findlay, Sir Francis Lacey (late secretary), Stanley Jackson, and

the old trusted friend of cricketers and politicians, Lord Bridgeman.

Outside, the Australians are batting and are held up by Verity who bowls, morning and afternoon, brilliantly, taking fourteen wickets; and in the out-field a splendid catch by Walters, who swoops on to the flying ball, helps in the win for England by an innings and thirty-eight runs. The onlookers, exceeding 30,000, watch keenly through the three days' cricket, cheering (and not jeering) both sides where praise at the wicket or in the field is due.

This is the other test that day.

Our gracious Majesty steps down from the pavilion and greets the opposing teams, shaking hands in his kindly way with the twenty-two cricketers and two umpires.


CHAPTER VIII

LONDON

ST. JOHN'S WOOD BARRACKS—LORD WILLIAM SEYMOUR—QUEEN VICTORIA'S FUNERAL—KING EDWARD VII'S FIRST PARLIAMENT—CEREMONIALS—THE GALLOP PAST—STATE BALLS—LONDON OF THAT DAY—PRINCE ARTHUR OF CONNAUGHT—SIR DAVID ERSKINE—SIR COLIN KEPPEL—CLUB LIFE—THE KING LUNCHESES—MUSIC

How good is man's life, the mere living. How fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses, for ever in joy.

BROWNING.

N 1901 I was quartered at St. John's Wood Barracks, London, the one Battery Station envied by many. The Barracks were unhealthy and later I suffered for months with a poisoned throat.

Lord William Seymour, then Governor of the Tower, and great uncle to Arthur Erskine, lunched with us one day. He washed his hands in my room, in which the paper on the walls peeled off with the dampness. He looked at the forlorn faded wallpaper: "Ah, I remember that wallpaper. This was my room when I returned from the Crimea."

He had returned from that campaign as a Foot-guardsman in 1855; therefore the room had not been repapered for forty-six years. The men's quarters were in better condition.

We were proud of our intensely smart Battery, and to turn out on all occasions absolutely spick and span was the order. Spit and polish, combined with efficiency, not only in drill, but in correct deportment at State Ceremonies was essential and became a habit.

Amongst the many important ceremonials we took part in

was firing eighty-one guns in Hyde Park when our dear Queen died ; and providing the gun-carriage, one of the two belonging to my section, and which is now at the Tower of London, for the conveyance of our beloved Queen Victoria.

I was sent in command of a deputation, with two staff sergeants, representing the Royal Regiment of Artillery, to present a wreath at Windsor Castle. We went in full dress (Review Order), I in my Jacket and the staff sergeants looking extremely smart in their dark blue tunics.

The Master Gunner, Windsor Castle, met us at Windsor. We presented our wreath to the official at the Castle. I remember the feeling of disappointment ; the official at the door was not a gracious personage, we were not thanked. We were offered no refreshment.

Then the King's first Parliament, when we fired forty-one guns in St. James' Park ; King Edward the Seventh's Coronation Procession ; the Royal Progress through the City of London, in which the whole Battery progressed.

On this occasion, whilst His Majesty lunched at the Mansion House, we waited outside, and from the gun limbers pulled out bottles of champagne in place of ammunition, much to the joy of the crowd who cheered us as each bottle popped off.

The King's Birthday ; the birth of a Royal baby ; the funeral of some one important, etc., etc., all these ceremonial occasions brought us into the streets of London with our gold-braided jackets and rumbling guns.

There were five officers in all ; Colonel Phil Taylor, Captain Davson, Erskine, Bates and I. I liked them all. Our Commanding Officer, a hero of the South African War, and Captain Davson, were always considerate and nice to me.

" Bien Aimée " and " Colonel " acted as my two chargers. " Colonel " was a showy bay with a long, lashing tail, and always too fresh for the London streets.

On one occasion, when passing Buckingham Palace, his tail waving from side to side dipped into the open window of a Royal carriage. My commanding officer shouted to me :

“Look out, your horses’s tail is in a Royal carriage.” I called back : “It’s all right, sir, so long as the Princess inside don’t pull it.”

And on another occasion whilst processing past Trafalgar Square, no amount of leg applied to his quarters would prevent “Colonel” from clearing all the flower-pots from off a platform on which General Botha hoped to make a speech.

Erskine and I shared the solemn office of carrying the dear old Duke of Cambridge, late Commander-in-Chief, on his last journey, I from his home to Westminster Abbey, and Arthur from the Abbey to his grave. The Duke’s sons presented me with a photograph of their father to commemorate this, the two Fitzgeorges sitting each side of me explaining their wishes as regards details for their father’s funeral.

When Reggie Ward died, I led the *cortège*, and the King commanded that we pass by the Palace, where he and his lovely Queen Alexandra stood on the balcony and saluted a dear departed friend. I and my men looked up and saluted. Lord Dudley, Ward’s brother, who met and thanked me at Paddington Station, was at that time Viceroy of Ireland.

The funeral of Prince Edward Saxe-Weimar was another sad duty I had to superintend, Royalty and persons of high estate, including Lord Roberts, following my gun-carriage.

For two years we performed at the Royal Tournament, King Edward and his Queen being present. It was here I first met Lord Roberts, and dined at his home afterwards.

In July, 1903, M. Loubet, President of France, arrived in London and witnessed a Grand Review. An account in the papers of the March Past of the Royal Horse Artillery read as follows :

“A brief word of command, and, like an avalanche set free, the gunners launched themselves at a tearing gallop across the plain. There is something in the almost reckless abandon with which our Royal Horse Artillery execute their brilliant movement, that sets the blood tingling in the veins and brings a lump into the throat.

"The most phlegmatic onlooker cannot avoid a thrill as the mighty mass of guns, horses and men hurls itself along, literally *ventre à terre*: and a rousing cheer broke from ten thousand tongues as the Brigades flew past the saluting point, the solid earth trembling to the thunder of their passage."

How "Bien Aimée" seemed to love those marches past. She bounded in the air on the order "Gallop." And the roar of the guns tearing behind her filled her with *joie de vivre*, and she bucked all down the course in sheer exuberance of spirits.

Once during a practice "gallop past" Arthur Erskine's horse got the bit between his lips and bolted. The Battery halted, but Arthur's horse tore through the Battery, put his foot in a hole, fell and threw his rider to the ground. He lay still. I rode towards him to help my friend. I was frightfully cursed by the Captain for daring to move, and returned to my place in the ranks. Arthur nearly had an ear torn off that day.

There were many social functions of the most brilliant kind when King Edward the Peacemaker came to the throne.

I attended levees, and on two occasions lunched and dined with Sir Arthur Bigge (Lord Stamfordham) at his quarters in St. James' Palace. Sir Arthur Bigge was Private Secretary to Queen Victoria and our present King. He and his family were charming.

I attended a State ball at Buckingham Palace on July 8th, 1903. I was twenty-six years old. The President of the French Republic, our present King and Queen and many Princes and Princesses were present. We danced vigorously in the lovely ball-room. It was a brilliant scene. M. Loubet sat between the King and Queen on the raised dais at the end of the room, just the three figures. King Edward was fast asleep, and Queen Alexandra, looking like a beautiful fairy queen, sat on M. Loubet's left, smiling down at the dancers. Later, the King and Queen danced in a quadrille. It was very dignified and stately, as everything was which our gracious Monarch took part in.

The Queen wore a dress of pale yellow satin, embroidered in mauve orchids, a tiara of diamonds with lovely pearls and

diamonds amongst the Orders of the Garter, Victoria and Albert, the Crown of India and the Danish Family Order.

In June next year I attended another ball at the Palace. Again the brilliant scene of Princes and Princesses. The Archduke Frederick of Austria was there. The room was a blaze of colour. Perhaps the most outstanding and dignified figure in the room, besides the King, was that of the Duke of Connaught in the sombre uniform of the Rifle Brigade, with the blue ribbon of the Garter.

I left Buckingham Palace with Lord Aberdour, who clanked down the steps, tripping over his sword, in an amazing uniform half Lifeguardsman, and the other half indescribable. I asked him what it all meant, and he said: "How d'you like it? I invented it myself, my own Scottish Yeomanry." We hopped into a hansom cab and drove down the Mall.

Dances, dinners, riding in the Row in the mornings and cricket made up the happy season in London for me. There were no motors yet. London in those days, in the West End, was far less crowded all the year round; the money-makers were busy in the City and not so extensively as now in the West End.

The aristocracy and landed gentry lived in their lovely homes and on their great estates in the country, with their tenants in farms and cottages, working on the land, and surely happier there.

To-day these one-time owners of large properties, robbed through death duties and taxation, have sold their country homes and drifted to London. Their tenants, deprived of good (in many cases) landlords and squires of estates, on whom they depended so much in their daily lives, have flocked to the towns and deserted the country.

The squires now live pacing the streets of London, their sons and daughters selling in the shops. And all the youth of all the classes are off the land.

The splendid youth of England, like the native in India, is counting his pice as he rushes up and down the busy streets;

the women of all classes, with crimson lips, rouged cheeks and plucked eyebrows, all look discontented.

We are told that to compensate for this the masses are better off. If so, why do the aimless and leaderless flocks of sheep, always holiday-making, look so dissatisfied? It is the land which counts, only the land, the working of the land.

FARMERS

What if the back be stooped and the skin be dried,
Tending the soil? The sun, the wind and the rain
Leave kindlier marks than avarice and pride
On the face and hands of a man. One's share of pain
Had better be got from simple things like drouth
And yellowing plants, than from the dread disease
Of melancholia that puts upon the mouth
A smile deformed, and lashes the memories
Until they burn. O farmer, your plough and hoe
And the sweat you drop on the seedlings in the ground,
Bring you a harvest of verdant life to show;
While we who are occupied the seasons round
With thoughts and cunning schemes, whose souls are curved
Even as your back is, have not seen the fruit
Of our cultivation ripen, nor have we served
Earth, nor ourselves—discouraged and destitute.

HELENE MULLINS.

Everything else fades, but the land remains.

Prince Arthur of Connaught, at that time in the 7th Hussars, was attached to our brigade. As our battery was quartered in London, we saw very little of him. He was naturally popular with all ranks.

I presume at his own request he was always, in the Officers' Mess, addressed as "Jackson."

A rather old and dignified Court official lunched one day at the Mess. A brother officer across the table called out: "Jackson, do hurry up with the salt"; and to the bewilderment of the old official, Prince Arthur passed over the salt-cellar.

Beyond meeting him at Artillery Practice Camp I had not

the honour of the acquaintance of the Duke's son. Whether he was a keen soldier I never knew.

After a long morning's shoot and I had been sitting next to him on Salisbury Plain, he only made to me one remark as regards the morning's work: "Thank God the battle's over," and off'd it to lunch.

Whilst quartered at Woolwich and London, it was natural to take part to a certain extent in various London functions.

At this time I came into contact with many kind people: Georgie Buller, daughter of Sir Redvers Buller, Lord Valencia's family the Annesleys, and Bigges I constantly met at dances and elsewhere. Arthur's father and mother, Sir David and Lady Horatia Erskine, welcomed me always at Speaker's Court, where Sir David was for forty years Deputy Sergeant and Sergeant-at-Arms in the House of Commons; and I stayed with them at their beautiful Scotch home, Lochend, near Cardross.

Sir David had been Groom of the Robes to Queen Victoria and King Edward. Whilst robing the King at the Coronation, His Majesty said to Sir David: "I hear the guns firing in St. James's Park," and he said: "Yes, sire, my son is helping to fire the guns."

I stayed at Downes where Sir Redvers Buller had returned after the South African War; at Crewe Hall with Lord Crewe's family, with the Fitz-Herberts in Derbyshire for races and dances in the "Dukeries"; hunting at Retford with the Denisons, and balls at lovely Serlby Hall, Lord Galway's country seat, etc., etc.

Very often at Hardwick, the home of my godmother, Lady Rose, where in earlier days all my family stayed for many Christmases in this cheery and beautiful Elizabethan house.

I was staying at Hardwick in 1906, and I remember my host, C. D. Rose (Sir Charles Rose), Liberal Member for Newmarket, coming up to me and saying: "I wish that silly old man of yours, Lord Roberts, would cease whining about preparations for war." As a young officer, I felt some resentment at this; the C.I.C. (Lord Roberts), so it seemed to my youthful mind,

must have had good reason for that warning of his. Charles Rose's comment sounded false.

The *Memories* which Lloyd George is now penning (June, 1934) would ring truer if the author had in its pages owned to his disregard, as a prominent member of the Liberal Government, for Lord Roberts' warning for preparedness for war.

L. G. would have less reason to sneer at England's soldiers had he listened to the old C.I.C. He forgets that he himself is greatly responsible for the shortcomings he exposes.

I stayed sometimes with Admiral Sir Colin Keppel, who lived near Ascot, the home of his father, old Admiral Sir Harry Keppel, under whom my father served in the Navy, and who afterwards so befriended him.

Admiral Sir Harry Keppel was Father of the Fleet. He died a very old man. I have several letters written by this beloved old sailor to my father. Lady Keppel, the wife of Sir Colin Keppel, was kind and sweet, with two lovely daughters, Marie and Melita.

Once, staying there we decided to have a ride with the Guards Draghounds. All the house party turned out. I sent for "Bien Aimée." It resolved itself into a race in which Lord Aberdour and I finished over the last post and rails neck and neck at the tail of the hounds.

Lord Henry Seymour, beautifully turned out, took a header at the first fence; and with his top hat over one red and angry eye, pursued his way on foot after a vanishing quadruped, applauded by the house party.

Later Sir Colin Keppel became Black Rod and Sergeant-at-Arms. From Woolwich on occasions I drove in the battery cart to dances in London. Once, returning from London along the Old Kent Road at four in the morning, the battery "Hairy" slipped on the tramlines. The next thing I realized was that I was sitting astride the horse's head as he lay on the cobblestones.

All the contents of the cart, including the seat, had left the cart and were on the horse's back. My opera hat was bashed

in on the back of my head. Had anyone passed by and seen this comic turn no doubt they would have smiled ; but at that hour of dawn, when vitality is at its lowest, and mine was certainly at its lowest, this forlorn and endless road was deserted. So no one witnessed the fun.

I remained sitting on my horse's head ruminating as to my next move. I knew that directly I left his head, the steed, a fiery chestnut, would dart up and off, and I might not get clear of the cart wheels. In the end I scrambled nimbly on all fours to the gutter. Immediately my friend shot up and away along the Old Kent Road.

The only milkman up that morning caught the flying battery cart and handed it back to me with the remark : " Does this belong to you, sir ? " With a broken shaft and none the worse I got back to barracks.

In the London season there were dances and dinners most nights and we chose the nicest invitations. Dances given by the Albert Brasseys, Strathmores, etc., at Lord Bute's house where, all in kilts, the lairds and their families danced reels, and we sat out in the luxurious gardens of this house in the inner circle of Regent's Park on a warm summer night, listening to the lions roaring at the Zoo.

And again Scotch reels at the Caledonian ball, where we appeared in our gold jackets ; and many other houses of kind hostesses where one met the lovely youth of Edwardian days, now many of them grandfathers and grandmothers.

About this time we belonged to the New Club, 4 Grafton Street, the " Subalterns' " Club as it was called, owing to several young officers of the Guards and Rifle Brigade making use of it. Six guineas entrance fee and two guineas annual subscription. A perfectly cooked three-course lunch for 1s. 6d., and four-course dinner for half a crown ; with a hall porter, Jordan by name, a feature of the club, prepared to do everything in the world for you.

Many well-known men became members of this famous club, some rather shady ones, several racing touts included. How-

ever, it became so popular that one day an old dignified member of Society, hearing of the high reputation of this club, resolved to become a member.

On the way out, after inspecting the house, he was bitten in the calf of the leg by one of the brighter members who, somewhat inebriated, was lying on the hall mat imitating Cerberus, (so he announced from the floor), guarding the gates of hell.

The would-be member's ardour was somewhat cooled as a result of this unpleasing episode, and he resolved to withdraw his name as a candidate of the New Club.

Another club of which I have been a member for about twenty-seven years is the second oldest formed club in London.

It is not a soldiers' club. Many Masters of Hounds have, and do now, belong to it. Probably the greater number of its members hail from the country, some of them relics of the country squire. Horsey gents in the better sense of the word, they do not, for instance, drop their aitches, or dock their gggs.

They seldom miss an important race. Many of them are owners of race-horses. The walls of the club are adorned with pictures of race-horses, "St. Simon," "Jerry M," that splendid Grand National winner "Cloister," and "Covercoat," and other notable horses owned by former members of the club.

Their conversation is almost entirely of the Turf, the form of a horse on that particular day, the flight of some particular pheasant or golf-ball, the colossal size of some particular fish which escaped; and if by chance you introduced into the general chat remarks remote from racing, golfing, shooting or fishing you would be answered intelligently, but you would be voted dull and the subject, so alien to the taste of these good fellows, would die a natural and swift death, followed by a very long silence—very long indeed.

A member up in Town for the day, rash enough ever to expect geniality and a warm welcome from his brother members, would be sorely disappointed (indeed he would never expect it). Even after a long absence he would not be received gushingly. A member might look up from his Turf calendar or the

Field and say "Hello," but would return at once to his paper, and silence would reign anew. . . . Last week, I must say, one member did exert himself sufficiently to pronounce a whole sentence: "Hello, up from the jungle again?" The jungle, I presume, meant the New Forest near which I live. Probably the greatest shock ever inflicted on the older members was on the occasion when a bright young spark arrived in the morning-room in *white flannels*, and, looking round the room at the usual scene of old men bowed over the fire, said: "Gentlemen, let us pray."

Not well received this.

Traditions and privileges still exist in this select and dignified house. Some members make a habit of entering the morning-room with their hats on and sitting in the bow-window all the morning, hatted; a harmless habit. Until recent years one or two members lunched in their top hats; harmless too.

Women hate this club. It is the "holy of holies" of the male sex, and wives and daughters dislike walking up and down St. James's Street waiting for their lords and masters; but still more do they dislike entering the hall of the club where they are met with polite, suave, but distinctly chilly glances from the hall porter or passing members.

I remember at another club, a Service club, two very ancient general officers sitting over the fire in silence until one of them on making some remark received no answer from his fellow-member. He looked up, then rang the bell. "Waiter," he said, "remove this member, he is dead, and bring me a small whisky and soda." The old member had died in his sleep.

At another, a non-military club, an irritable member rang the bell for the waiter. "Waiter, remove this member, he has been dead over a week."

You see, at this club no one *ever* spoke to anyone else, and each member occupied his own especial chair, so that it was only natural that no one noticed this member, seated on his own particular throne, as dead as Queen Anne; nor was it worth

any waiter's place to disturb a member who appeared merely to be taking an extra long nap.

There are many compensations for want of actual gush at my club, and peace and quiet, these days, are by no means to be despised.

The greater number of the members are charming people to meet; many I have not the privilege of knowing, only the privilege of sitting next to them for—twenty-seven years.

The service is probably second to none in London. The furnishing of this lovely house expresses a happy combination of extreme good taste and comfort. Beautiful old silver vessels adorn the dinner-tables, excellent and disciplined service at meals helps one to appreciate a dinner fit for any gourmet. The Adams room, with its large window overlooking St. James' Street, has been pronounced, as regards proportion and beauty, the most perfect of its kind in London.

In no other country in the world do men's clubs, as we know them in London, exist, the safe and privileged sanctum of the perfect English gentleman.

At Woolwich in 1906 I was acting A.D.C. to Sir John Leach, when King Edward, Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Regiment, came and lunched at the Mess.

Leach, commanding the troops at Woolwich, made a long and boring speech about the wonderful Mess plate. His Majesty went to sleep. The General continued at great length before the sleeping Monarch, describing the beautiful centre-piece presented by William IV, his grandsire, in which curiously enough the British Lion is sitting on the top of a coco-nut tree, the three branches of the Artillery grouped round the tree.

The King, overhearing the last remark in his dream, woke up and stood up. We all stood. He said in his deep rich voice that he did not care where the British Lion was so long as it was not "up a tree." At which we laughed controlledly. He spoke charmingly and well.

On the King's departure all the young officers of Horse,

Field and Garrison Artillery formed each side of me as a Guard of Honour.

At my aunt Lady Clayton's house in Great Cumberland Place, during the season in London, many celebrated musicians of that day occasionally met, including Henry Wood, Holman, Abbass, etc., etc., an informal meeting at which these brilliant artists played to each other. I was perhaps the only person present outside this musical circle thus assembled.

I remember the 'cellist Holman played "Le Cygne," and I thought it beautiful. This lovely melody, quiet, sincere and veracious in its execution, resembled the sweet running waters of a stream, which, welling up to the stone edge of the fall, overflow gently drop by drop, note by note into the clear surface below, in which the swan glides on and on.

In Victorian days, and even later, it was not unusual after dinner for a guest to be asked to play or sing, and, thus invited, he or she would unhesitatingly advance to the piano. Some of the many I have listened to in my youth had sweet, natural, sympathetic voices ; and undoubtedly on the piano their playing showed talent, because women, in particular, were well taught.

Then, on occasions, some guest would stand up and recite. They would quote poetry or tell the creepy story of a haunted house with all the necessary rhetoric to cause a thrill.

I think that the general verdict to-day is : " Thank God such performances now are not encouraged."

To-day the wireless and gramophone, mechanical channels, convey to us all the music we require, and ensure us against individual effort at our homes. The modern bright young things, I am told, break into song only when in their cups ; they express themselves crudely in bibulous moments. They have been taught that unless they have technique they had better not attempt to play or sing.

They may have natural, sympathetic voices, but " technique " is the death-cry to any attempt at self-expression. On the other hand, the fat, middle-aged professional female warblers, full of technique (with chests like dreadnoughts), peal out into the

night like steam-engines at Victoria Station, and drown the timid amateur, whose sweet and natural voice no one will ever hear.

The personal touch, a song or tune simply and charmingly sung or played in one's home by a girl perhaps not perfectly trained, gives me more pleasure than the shrieking female on the wireless, whatever the latter's technique may be. Who cares how she blows out her songs, or how she pouts her raddled lips ? Before long she will howl her technique at you and leave you cold . . . and possibly deafened.

Certainly women professional songsters are the worst offenders in this trade.



CHAPTER IX

THE FROG

Every yard of sunny space,
Rears and tends its little race.
Half a hundred little hearts
Play unseen their tiny parts. . . .

A. C. BENSON.

YESTERDAY, whilst driving my car in a lovely Hampshire lane, I had to stop on the road. A very large frog was crossing. He took some time and it was a long way for him to get across.

A few short hops, then he said: "Wait a sec'"; he then exerted himself, to the full, all out. He was so stretched out for his final bound that he became one long straight line, leaping at a great height through the air. He landed safely on the grass edge.

He was very blown and was panting, but not too blown to say, with his eyeballs looking back: "Thank you." I drove on.

I wish all people were as polite as frogs. I am ashamed to think now that I have eaten frogs—a sinister thought.

It was in 1889, the year of the Paris Exhibition. I thought I was eating chicken. M. Carnot was then President of France. I remember standing near him and his shaking hands with my father. He was unlike the usual French President, a gentleman by birth. He was assassinated.

The Eiffel Tower was built for this exhibition, and we were up to the top, 984 feet high, almost as soon as it was open.

CHAPTER X

INDIA

H.M. HABIBULLAH KHAN, AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN—WINDBAGS' OLD PUPIL—
RAWAL PINDI—THE BABUS—CHAUBATTIA WITH THE RIFLE BRIGADE—
A BEAR SHOOT—SIR HAROLD DEANE—THE KHAIBER PASS

IN September, 1906, I had orders to join "J" Battery Royal Horse Artillery in India. In a year's time Captain Gosset and I brought it home to Woolwich. My first visit to India.

That year the Amir or Ruler of Afghanistan, Habibullah Khan, visited India. He arrived in state at Rawal Pindi, in the north of India, where I was stationed.

With him was a large retinue of Afghan officers and servants. He had not previously visited British India. His home was in a very uncivilized country. He was a short man, thick set and pleasant looking.

A marquee was erected on the Maidan, from which His Majesty witnessed the March Past of the troops quartered at Rawal Pindi.

He expressed a wish to see my two guns, which for his benefit galloped into action. And then I was asked to show him fuses and shells. The conversation was carried on through an interpreter.

He came up to the guns walking between his two hugely tall, massive and forbidding-looking uncles, obviously twins, and as like as two peas; dressed in long black frock-coats, black astrakhan head-gear and long black beards.

An account in the local paper of the military display before the Amir read as follows :

“The troops marched past the saluting point with all the pomp of ceremonial review. The Amir watching with intentness. Afterwards the guns of the Horse Artillery galloped up and came into action immediately in front of the Amir who, when the manœuvre was finished, entered upon a close examination of the guns. The Amir spoke spiritedly of the fine soldierly turn-out, his admiration going far beyond formal compliment.”

From Rawal Pindi His Majesty entrained to Agra, where at the station he met with a Guard of Honour commanded by my brother.

He had now met the two brothers within a few hours : what an honour for the Amir.

On the platform at Agra some altercation between my brother and the G.O.C. Northern Army could have been heard, and the King of the Afghans was obliged to wait until Windbags’ old pupil of the golden locks, now alas, slightly bald and slightly heated, had finished ticking off the General.

The G.O.C. had erroneously announced to the Amir that the very smart regiment present in his honour was the 60th Rifles. No more unpardonable assertion could have been made, and my brother in command of the Guard (who incidentally had not been asked to make any remark) could have been heard vehemently protesting : “No, sir, this is not the 60 Rifles, this is the Rifle Brigade.”

No doubt the Amir was extremely interested ; all these little incidents, for a king, help to make a happy day.

In 1919 Habibullah Khan was assassinated in his city of Kabul. Lord Minto was Viceroy at this time (1906), one of the most charming and loved Viceroys India has ever had. Horace Webber in our battery was sent down to Calcutta to act as A.D.C. to His Excellency. Horace, like many others, at once fell under the spell of the Viceroy’s charming daughters. So much did he admire them that they sent their pet dogs to be looked after at our bungalow ; this was indeed an honour. I was handed out a dachshund to care for, which within a short period produced eight puppies of amazing description, she

having allied herself with a friendly pariah. She was very proud of this party, leading me up to her newly born family with little mutterings of pride. I have never seen their equal. We did not send these freaks to the Palace at Calcutta.

Horace Webber and I often in the evenings during the hot weather rode across the broken and cultivated country to the north of Rawal Pindi, a distance of ten or so miles, to the foot of the Himalayas, where at a rest-house the four-horse brake met us ; and after dinner we drove home in the cool of the night.

On the ride out we were always beautifully mounted on chargers, and we took everything in our stride as we rode across country, a fierce-looking Sikh syce riding at our heels.

On one occasion we rode our horses home. As we approached Rawal Pindi we realized that the rumour of a rising in the native city had materialized. Crowds of restless natives filled the narrow streets, and here and there a red reflection in the sky indicated the burning of a building. The cantonments were about two and a half miles distant at the other side of the city. Rather than go some miles round, and so avoid the bazaar, we decided to gallop knee to knee through the city on our heavy-weight chargers, with revolvers cocked. This we did. We rode at a terrific rate, scattering the terrified natives in all directions.

One tub-thumper, haranguing the mob, at the sight of these two horsemen descending upon him, took a header off his tub as we flew past, and sprawled in the mud.

Next morning I saw many leaders of the rioters driven up to jail at the point of the sword by the 10th Hussars. "J" Battery, R.H.A., turned out in full marching order with its six menacing guns, as a reminder to those who threatened further trouble. Such disturbances were an echo of Lord Curzon's unfortunate reign as Viceroy in India.

I liked the natives of India of all classes and religions with whom I came in contact. They seemed like children to me. My servants were loyal to me.

The Babu is a pleasant joke and is fit only for the stage. He has been described elsewhere and needs no description here. He talks English in a sing-song way like a Welshman. He has only a vague knowledge of the meaning of half he says, and for this reason he is likely to explode into expressions both humorous and startling.

One Babu, on the decease of his wife, wrote to a friend of mine as follows :

“Honoured Sir,—I regret to inform you that I cannot attend your meeting because the hand that rocked the cradle has kicked the bucket. I commend you to Almighty God, whom your Honour so greatly resembles.”

And during the war when Austria seceded from further operations, a Babu was heard to say : “Have you not heard the great news, man ? Australia has resigned.”

I stayed with my brother at Chaubattia, where his regiment, 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade, was then quartered for the hot weather.

The scene from his bungalow was grand and beautiful in the extreme. Perched as it was high up in the fir-clad hills, one looked down over a deep valley which was thickly wooded.

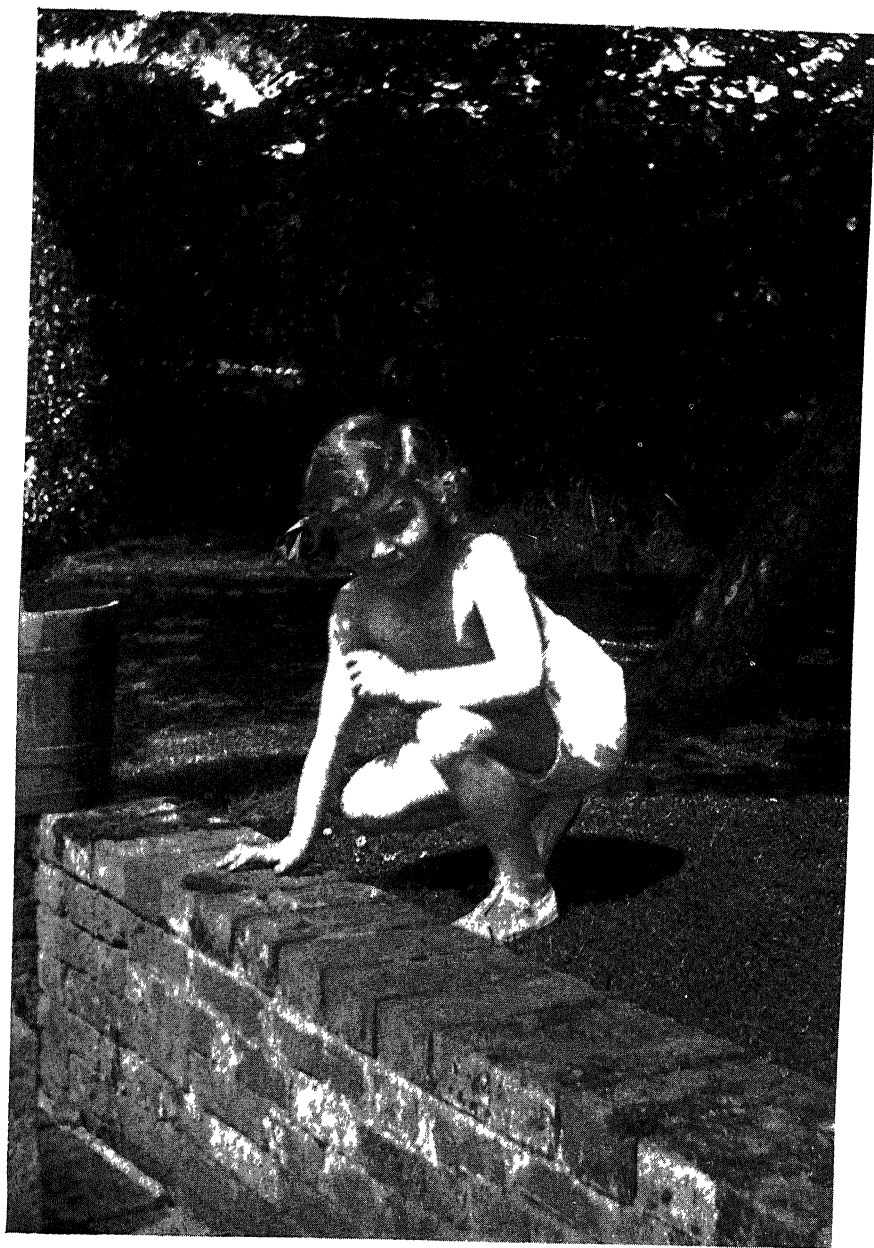
There is nothing more satisfying than looking down over the green surface of a forest of trees.

Beyond this green sea of huge tree-tops were low-lying wisps of cloud, and in the distance, above the soft waves of cloud, rose the snow-peaked range of the Himalayas. The beautiful mountain Nanda Devi, 28,650 feet, stood proudly above the clouds, sparkling in the sun as if covered with glistening diamonds.

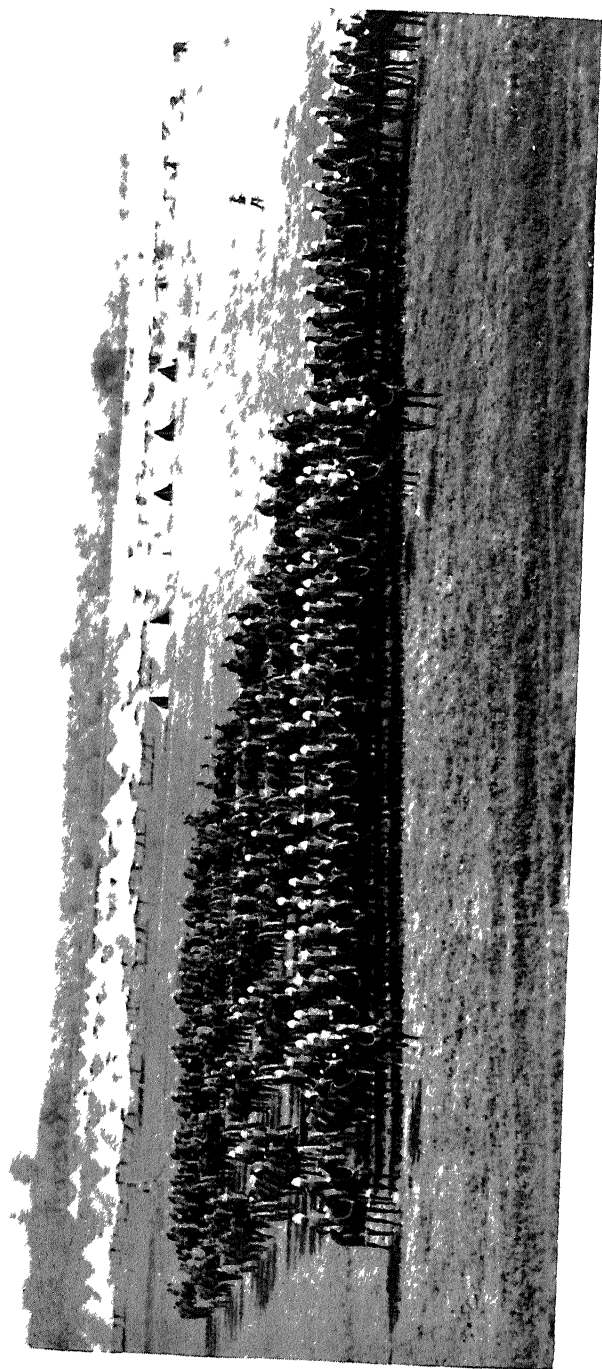
One holds one's breath in wonder at such magnificence.

I remember my little daughter Gioia, as a tiny child, gazing in awe across the lake of Geneva at the snow-covered Alps. It was God's message to a child telling her of His power and the wonder thereof. She was speechless as she gazed with her dark, lovely eyes at this vision of beauty.

Such moments are sacred.



GIOIA
(MY SECOND DAUGHTER)



'J' BATTERY AT RAWAL PINDI 1927

My brother was big-game shooting beyond the hills and forests I had gazed at, in the direction of the Niti Pass, not far distant from Little Thibet.

He had delayed his return home through sickness, so I resolved to go and meet him, two days' journey through the forest. I marched on foot with six bearers, one carrying a magnum of champagne on his head. My brother's wife was slightly anxious, as she had received letters from him announcing that he was being cared for by two charming ladies, who had a tin-covered mission-house up there in the wilds, two hundred miles from anywhere.

Of course she was anxious.

The march along narrow paths in the forest, where inquisitive monkeys followed me from tree to tree, and birds of brilliant plumage flashed in the sun, was full of interest.

Up in the hills I came across a small hut in a village, where cross-legged on a charpoy (bed), an old Indian with a long white beard was teaching about a dozen tiny boys, all squatting on the floor. The old teacher was delightful. On the wall was a map of the world. I asked one of the wee Indian scholars if he could point out England on the map, and a small dark finger swiftly pointed out the little island, India's little mother.

I met my brother and "James" Boyle, his subaltern, at the dak bungalow. Windbags would not have recognized her old pupil, whose chin was now fringed with a red beard, a regular "Newgate frill." Boyle and my brother made an indecent rush for the champagne. The missionary ladies turned out to be somewhat ancient, numbering in years 130 between them. There was no cause for anxiety.

Whilst staying at Chaubattia, complaints came in from the hills that a Himalayan bear had been causing trouble in a village some miles to the north. Harold Whitaker, who was a noted big-game shot, asked me if I would come out with him and destroy the bear.

We marched for three hours through the forest. Eventually, as we neared the village of mud huts on the mountain-side, we saw

the bear and we both shot at her, my shot kicking up the dust between her legs as she bounded away. Behind her, unable to keep up and complaining bitterly, were two small cubs. One of them hurried up a tree on the cud side, the other disappeared.

By this time a party of about thirty entirely unclothed hill-men arrived. Through the assistance of Whitaker, who could talk the lingo sufficiently to be understood, I requested one of the hill-men to ascend the tree and bring down the cub. It was not an easy climb, and the infuriated ball of fur at the summit was far from encouraging.

Seeing refusal on the part of the hill-man, I took off my coat with the dismal intention of showing a good example.

At once, on the promise of two rupees, one young fellow climbed up and shook the topmost branches. The ball of fur hurtled through the air on to some bushes, where he was captured and held in a cloth, then secured with a rope, swearing and furious.

All so far had gone well, and the attitude of the naked and dusky crowd was up till now, outwardly at all events, friendly.

We started on our long journey home. We noticed that all the hill-men followed close at our heels. We came to a narrow path with a steep cud on one side and rocks on our right. The crowd following looked unpleasant and Whitaker told the head man to move on in front of him.

Without any warning two men leapt at Whitaker. I was just ahead of him. I turned and saw one of the men with a long-handled axe poised over his head in the act of smiting Whitaker with it. I rushed at the attacker and bowled him over. Seizing the axe I stood with my back to the rocks with Whitaker, who had now shaken off the other attacker. Pandemonium reigned; we had an angry mob on two sides of us. They hurled pieces of rock at Whitaker. Incidentally I was glad that they chose him and not me as "Aunt Sally."

We were in a position of great danger.

I remember thinking that on this day, June 4th, I might have been at Eton watching cricket and strolling in the playing

fields ; and here we were surrounded by an evil-smelling mob of hill-men, throwing rocks at our heads.

Suddenly the whole scene changed. With a roar and a snarl unusual in so small an animal, our cub, forgotten in the mêlée, charged through the attackers and bowled two men over.

All paused at this unexpected turn of events. At once Whitaker, in excellent patois, addressed the men. He told them that we were British officers and that if we were hurt they would be punished, etc., etc. ; that our rifles which they had seized must be handed over at once to our bearer, and the bear cub re-caught ; and that we must be unmolested.

It was a command showing courage and spirit.

With intense relief we saw these ruffians slink away. We got home with the cub, which became a pet in the Rifle Brigade Officers' Mess.

In a few days almost the entire village was brought in in chains. The head men of the village were awarded a year's imprisonment for assaulting British officers.

But we never understood the cause of hostility, unless it was provoked as an excuse for robbery.

In May, 1907, whilst at Rawal Pindi, Colonel Headlam (Sir John Headlam), Acting A.A.G. Peshawar Division, very kindly asked me to accompany him up the Khaiber Pass to Landi Kotal. We were to stay there two nights, ride round the Landi Kotal position and find our way back to Peshawar by the Kabul river.

At Peshawar I dined alone with Sir Harold Deane, Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province. He was kind and nice, and very interested to hear of my father. They had been boys together and came from the same village in Suffolk. My father had given Deane his sword which, on important occasions, he had always worn in his thirty years' service in India.

Sir Harold was a striking figure, well over six feet in height. His popularity, power and influence with the natives in the tribal district was unique. His position as Chief Commissioner

was one of great responsibility, requiring considerable tact. Political questions of the highest importance were continually before him.

He lived in what we might describe as a palace.

This British representative had on one occasion been imprisoned in Kabul. He had the courage of a lion, men trembled before him.

The Grand Trunk Road extended from his house to Calcutta, a distance of 1600 miles.

Headlam and I travelled next day through the Khaiber to Landi Kotal, twenty-eight miles from Peshawar. Landi Kotal is a fort on the edge of Afghanistan, an outpost of Empire. It was garrisoned by the Khaiber Rifles, a kind of militia recruited chiefly from the tribesmen of that desperate country, who, when not fighting for England, might quite possibly be fighting for their own tribes against British troops.

The fort we eventually arrived at in the evening was a formidable enough looking stronghold, lying at the Afghan end of the Khaiber Pass, up which we had travelled, nineteen and a half miles from Jamrud, the fort at the British end.

The country to the north end was bounded by lofty mountain peaks and precipitous walls, and on the south side by a confused tract of broken ground forming a series of ravines and ridges : the protected British highway through tribal territory where no law is respected except the law of force.

Roos-Keppel commanded the battalion of disciplined savages in the Khaiber with six officers under him.

Planted in this wild, weird and romantic country of desperate tribes, the square fort itself, with the British flag fluttering lazily in the suffocating air, looked absurdly peaceful. And as if to emphasize the contrast of the inhospitable-looking surroundings with the inside of the fort, we saw, as we entered the strongly guarded gates, two English youths in white flannels playing tennis. ("Flannelled fools" again?)

"In this forlorn abiding place you will find the British subaltern neat and cool and comfortable, a boy with clear cheeks

and smooth hair, who handles his half-hundred wind-baked ruffians much as if they were the Second Eleven and he their captain. He may be shot down by a stray sniper from the hills any morning as he goes his rounds ; he has no one to talk to except three or four of his comrades, no society, no amusements, hardly any leisure ; he is always drilling his men or teaching them or making up their accounts, or finding out what mischief is brewing among the villages.

His life is as hard and as busy as that of the juniors in the wardroom of a man-of-war ; he takes it with the same reserved vivacity ; he keeps his health, his manners, his sense of humour.

There are those who say that the young British officer is always foolish and always idle. They should go and look at him in India and, above all, on the Frontier."

We were at Landi Kotal two days and never moved outside the fort without an armed escort. We were to all intents and purposes in a hostile country.

I have never seen a more magnificent or extensive view than that which we obtained from the high position above the fort ; and with the aid of telescopes, field-glasses and maps we were able to spot out all the Afghan towns, rivers and mountains for many miles round, and many places of historical interest.

Although we could see right over the plains of Peshawar to the east and the Kafristan and Chitral mountains about 150 miles to the north, our chief interest was centred on Afghanistan to the west ; and in this direction the Amir's country formed a plain through which the Kabul river curls in a north-west direction towards the capital of Afghanistan, over a hundred miles away ; the low cultivated country bounded on all sides by mountain ranges, for the most part "a kingdom of endless valleys, of yawning precipices and of wild mountain torrents."

Far away we could see the gardens of Jallalabad. The Kirkach Range hid the city of Kabul from view. One hundred miles away in this direction, north-west, the Hindu Kush, which boasts one of the highest peaks in the world (25,000 feet covered in perpetual snow), was plainly seen.

We 'could 'also 'make 'out the dark hills around Gandamak where the whole British force, all but one man, Dr. Brydon, was massacred in 1842.

On the second day we travelled on ponies, with an escort, sixteen miles across the mountains through tribal villages to the Kabul river. At each strongly fortified village an armed runner met us to ensure safety. We were given food by the Maliks, or chiefs, at every village.

On arrival at the Kabul river an old Mohmand chief, nominally hostile to England, shook us warmly by the hand. He offered us his boat, in which, rowed by tribesmen, we were carried swiftly down this river torrent. The old chief had crossed over the River Kabul to greet us, and he had heaped up in his boat a pile of Huntley and Palmer's biscuits as an offering.

Eventually we crossed into British territory, and rode back to Peshawar. So much for the Khaiber Pass, the scene of many a bloody fight from the time of Alexander the Great, the first invader of India, and Mahmud of Ghasni who devastated India seven times between the years A.D. 1000 and 1021.

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CHAPTER XI

SELF-MADE MEN

THE GARDEN-PARTY—THE NEWS-BOY—"PUNCH"

NEW-MADE HONOUR

A Friend I met, some half hour since—
"Good morrow, Jack," quoth I ;
The new-made Knight, like any Prince,
Frown'd, nodded and pass'd by ;
When up came Jem—"Sir John, your slave."
"Ah, James ; we dine at eight
Fail not—(low bows the supple knave)
Don't make my lady wait."
The King can do no wrong ? As I'm a sinner,
He's spoilt an honest tradesman and my dinner.

Ingoldsby Legends.



TODAY I met a man at a lovely party given by our Member.

This tall, good-looking fellow was perhaps sixty years old. His daughter with him was tall and beautiful in face and figure. When English girls are beautiful, they are the most lovely in the world, with their fresh complexions and graceful carriage.

Her father had been a Guardsman, he flew his colours ; and a Member of Parliament. He had a haughty manner. It was kind of him to talk to you—the hell of a fellow.

I remember his father. He had been a miner working in the mines ; rising steadily, eventually to become owner of a coal mine.

Many years ago, there often came to my grandfather's home

a charming elderly man whom my grandfather liked and esteemed very highly.

This man in my day was a much-honoured Member of Parliament and became a Peer. His son and grandson both married Peers' daughters. Now, all are Lords and Ladies.

The old man whom my grandfather befriended had been at one time a news-boy shouting the latest "murder" in the streets of London.

Sometimes I talk to a Communist or a Socialist with their grievances and terrible inferiority complexes. They growse about the lucky rich man and the titled coves. I tell them that to get into the front row is not always a matter of luck.

England is the only country in the world where every man with persistence, energy and intelligence can make his way up the ladder of life. In no other country is he so free to climb on and up to the highest positions, with a little luck, as in this England.

This is no exaggeration, and I have known many climbing from the lowest to the highest rung in one generation.

How fair and right it is that this possibility exists.

And such men are respected.

In the boat, on a four-day voyage to the Mediterranean, I had a travelling companion, an American. He was about seventy years old. With his slightly hooked nose and many kind wrinkles at the corners of his bright brown eyes, he reminded me of pictures of "Punch."

He was a rich man seeing the world; the rather portly figure carried dignity with it. He said he was in very poor state of health and was obliged to eat sparingly; nevertheless he never missed a meal on board ship, or a course in the ample menu, and ordered the steward in a self-pitying moan to bring him each night beef tea with brandy in it.

I wondered how my friend fared when he was really fit and well. He drank very little, but ate with distinction.

Before the third day of our acquaintance had passed, he had

told me the whole story of his life. Such a personal anecdote would be impossible amongst Englishmen meeting casually.

He told his story well, graphically ; the items of a humble life were interspersed with infinite detail, and spiced with quaint Americanisms. My heart warmed to him, he was so genuine.

As the life story flowed on, he repeatedly dug me in the ribs exclaiming : " You understand," or " Don't you see what I mean ? " accompanied by deep chuckles. He said : " I'm an uneducated man, I've no education ; I'm shy to go amongst people, I talk common. You see, I had to leave school, when I was seven, to scratch paint off my father's wheels, he was a wheelwright—never had a chance to be educated."

He was later on, it seems, a painter, choosing rich men as his clients. He painted walls and ceilings of rooms at the home of the original Mr. Woolworth. He took two years and a month to paint two of these rooms. One wonders what the effect of all this paint would have been on one had one seen it. What were the colours which he assured me would last for ever, and what the design which this Yank Michael Angelo had blobbed on walls and ceilings ?

With money in his pocket the cute old man now bought a plot of ground between Boston and New York, and erected thereon a petrol-pumping station, which he sold at a profit. Then he converted an old farm into an hotel and sold it at considerable profit. Finally he constructed various small settlements outside New York and sold these at enormous profit.

Three nephews, splendid, gallant men who had served all through the war or rather during the American entry into the war, returned home looking for jobs. On closer examination these heroes, it seemed, had served faithfully—at the base ; all were unwounded.

Uncle Punch producing four thousand odd dollars quickly bought a tiny shop where business was at its last gasp. It was going cheap. The nephews, in a year, developed this village shop into a modified " Selfridges."

Here came details of labour-saving devices thought out by Uncle, one-time scratcher of paint and painter of rich men's boudoirs.

To save time he coaxed the nephews into purchasing a meat machine through which first the buttocks (here Punch punched himself on that portion of his anatomy), then the rump and finally the sirloin were passed.

"D'you see what I mean?" and another jab in my ribs completed the account of the nephews' path to wealth.

Punch talked often of his clothes. He said he had been one year in England, chiefly in the country, fishing. He was measured for and bought at Southampton (of all places) many suits of clothes which he sent to America. Before loading up the ship with his wardrobe he said: "I send 'em to the laundry to have tags put on 'em, don't you see?" (a thump in the ribs). "Then I don't ever have to pay duty on 'em. In America I have 'em hung up in my cellar waiting for me"

He said: "You always see me in this suit, Harris tweed, nice stuff, smells good. But I got lots more suits in my cabin, plenty more. I got a good evening coat in my cabin, but I just like to keep like this. Now, if my wife was here I should have to change; you see, she's intelligent, better born than me, an educated woman, lots of dresses and jewellery; oh, a proper educated woman. I never let her do *any* work. I order the meals and arrange everything—everything. She just has to run around and enjoy herself, don't you see? She got her maid, so she got nothing to worry about—nothing at all."

This repeated often enough began to sound like a nigger song which one could quite happily entitle "She got nothing to do."

Actually I saw the woman on the quay at Southampton when Punch leaned over the rail on top deck to bid farewell to his spoilt spouse; a tall woman of uncertain age, with baggy eyes; a *malade imaginaire* "with nothing to do."

Punch was undoubtedly having a holiday.

After any yarn I told him, he always said: "Well, just think

of it ; now if my wife was here she'd just love to hear you talk. You see, she's an educated woman."

Punch was not common, of that he need not have been afraid. His speech may have sounded so, but with his personal charm, his natural sympathy for his fellow-man, his deep understanding of life, commonness as we know it had no place there.

Next door in the first class of that Dutch ship I met commonness immediately I stepped over the border. A Jew of the worst sort sat near me and flashed three enormous diamonds from his claw-like third finger, his hawk eyes glittered like beads—bright ornaments of an otherwise purely advertising scarecrow. A few painted, middle-aged American females in all their vulgar finery, which scarcely covered their ample bosoms, were common from the top of their bewigged heads to the soles of their flat feet.

The atmosphere in the first class was murky. Even Lord Lonsdale's cigar, for he was there, could not disinfect that tainted atmosphere of commonness.

In the second class, Punch, a jolly Dutch family of the *bourgeoisie*, a young captain of the Coldstream Guards with his newly wed wife, a few officials returning to their Dutch colonies, formed a happy contrast to the expensive class next door and spoke of lives lived well, and of a higher calling.

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CHAPTER XII

EGYPT

TROUBLE IN THE MESS—SIR JOHN MAXWELL—A SURVEY IN THE DESERT—
DEATH OF KING EDWARD—SIR ELDON GORST

IN 1910 Charles Stirling and I, his captain, were appointed again to Royal Horse Artillery after serving two successful years in Royal Field Artillery, during which period our battery carried off first prizes in gunnery in both years; Stirling to command the "Chestnut" Troop and I to a battery in Cairo.

I had heard no good accounts of this battery, and had no desire to join it. At the end of a week in Egypt the commanding officer came home on leave, and I, as Captain, took charge.

A few rather unpleasant officers belonging to regiments not quartered in Cairo were attached to our Mess. I was told by these gentlemen, on my arrival, that we gunners were lucky to be allowed to use *their* Mess. My only retort was that in England this was recognized as the Gunner Mess, had been for many years, and that as far as I could make out the luck was on their side and that we were indeed unlucky to be obliged to share a Mess with them.

The officer commanding the battery, now on leave, was naturally President of the Mess; I, as Captain, took over that duty. These officers, all senior to me, were furious.

I had considerable trouble with these officers, I remember, but in all the unpleasantness I was thoroughly backed up by Sir John Maxwell, Commander-in-Chief, and his charming Staff Officer, Solly Flood, whom I had known before.

As President, I soon discovered the shocking state in which

the Mess was run. On visiting the kitchen I found it in a disgusting condition ; the meat-safe, for instance, appeared to be the favourite grazing haunt for flies. On the floor of the kitchen I saw a heap of filthy blankets. On disturbing the heap with my foot I uncovered the sleeping form of the cook's unsavoury old grandfather. This, which had lain there for several years, was hustled out in as many seconds.

In the battery, amongst the men there were one or two malcontents, unusual in Horse Artillery. In a few days the Sergeant-Major told me that one man had been mad drunk, striking a non-commissioned officer, etc., and that he was a leader in discontent and crime. As I sat in the battery office waiting to deal with him, I heard the prisoner being led in, shouting and roaring up the passage. He was led in between two N.C.O.s. He came into the room, I stared at him. There was dead silence. At last I said very quietly : " What is the matter with you ? What is this noise ? In Horse Artillery such a noise and such conduct is unknown. You must be ill. I will have you mentally examined. March out."

He was sent to a lunatic asylum for two weeks at the recommendation of the M.O. Then sent home and discharged.

We had no more trouble of even the mildest sort whilst in Cairo. In October the battery sailed from Egypt to India.

Whilst at Cairo in the hot weather I worked the battery excessively hard, intensive training ; our manœuvre ground, the hard-baked desert round Abbasia. Night operations with the Coldstream Guards and Rifle Brigade formed part of the programme ; and an interesting reconnoitre for wells, two days' journey into the desert.

We made a survey in the desert in our immediate surroundings. To this day the hills and other features are to be found on the map, named by Walford and myself. And in all my work I was immensely helped by Saddler and by Garth Walford, who years later in the Great War was to earn the V.C.

These two subalterns were delightful and most capable.

In May, 1910, our well-loved and gracious King Edward

died. A great ceremony took place in Cairo. The battery fired a salute of guns across the Nile.

Sir Eldon Gorst was British Representative in Egypt. We had known his family in old days; I dined and lunched occasionally at Government House in Cairo, and at their beautiful villa outside Alexandria.

The Sirdar, Sir Reginald Wingate, the Maudesleys, Colonel Pinney, Teddie Hood and Ponsonby, commanding the Coldstream Guards, were amongst the charming people I met whilst in Egypt.

Arrived in India I remained at Lucknow with this battery only a few months. I got leave to England, and nothing, not even the threat by the War Office of losing my "Jacket," would persuade me to return. Here General "Freddie" Wing, the best and perhaps the most-loved officer in the Regiment, befriended me. I was appointed Staff Officer to Horne, and then as Adjutant Royal Horse Artillery Inverness.

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CHAPTER XIII

MILITARY AND CIVILIAN ASIDES

BLOWS ON THE GOLF LINKS—SIR CHARLES TUCKER—A SALUTE TO GOLFERS
—RODIN—PROVOST OF ETON AND WARDEN OF WINCHESTER—A SAILING
CLUB DINNER—LETTING OFF STEAM—TUB-THUMPERS

Caddie, give me my driver, caddie,
Note my style on the first few tees ;
Duncan fashioned my wrist work, laddie,
Taylor taught me to twist my knees ;
I've a beautiful swing that I learnt from Vardon
I practise it sometimes down the garden. . . .
(My fault. Sorry. I *beg* your pardon)—
Caddie, my driver, please.

A. A. MILNE.



HAVE played the royal and ancient game of golf four times in my life. My first attempt at the game was in 1892 on the ladies' links at Bembridge.

Toujours la politesse, the lady of the party smote the first ball ; my friend T—— stood nearby eagerly watching the first drive off. The ball, smitten with the force of youth and beauty behind it, travelled exactly five yards and landed on my poor friend's rather, until this moment, shapely nose. He fell to the ground or tee unconscious, and we carried him away on a hurdle.

I remember under the excuse of rendering first aid that I retired from the game. T——'s nose never recovered the golf blow, and at night, to this day, his wife will tell you—he snores horribly.

Our old friend Sir Charles Tucker, at that time over eighty years old, was playing golf at Biarritz. He was putting on the

green in a pleasant, leisurely way, when he heard a voice calling out: "Old men of your age ought not to be allowed to loiter on the course."

The old and distinguished General was well known for his somewhat stirring language. He awaited in silence the arrival of this uncouth youth, breeched in exaggerated plus-fours, who addressed him so impertinently.

Youth and Old Age, Impudence and Dignity, met on the green. Silently and with force old "bloody" Tucker smote the young sprig a shrewd blow with a niblick on the crown of his empty head. He lay like a felled ox entirely concussed . . . with his nose in the "hole." He also was carried away on a hurdle.

Sir Charles Tucker told me this story himself, and ended: "There was the hell of a row about it afterwards."

Colonel D—— (late Household Cavalry) came under the heading of fierce and almost dangerous when pursuing the golf-ball.

I recollect that on the golf-links at St. Briac his faulty shots at the ball upset him considerably. He used foul language, and as he added to his vocabulary he broke club after club across his knee. A little bare-legged and sabotless Breton girl caddie, stood opposite and stared up at his tall form in wonderment, with sweet, innocent grey eyes, while the storm continued.

Presently, still pursuing his observations on golf in epithets unheard of even amongst British admirals and colonels, his cold eye suddenly lit on a small caddie: "Who in the hell d'you think you're staring at, you little —— ———?"

The little Breton girl, not having understood one word of this terrible harangue, said sweetly: "Comment, Monsieur?"

With the growl of an enraged animal our Colonel swung off to the Club House.

My father, whilst at Dinard, played golf energetically and with skill. The two-horse brake, nearly every morning filled with old grey-beards, retired colonels, etc., wrapped in Inverness

capas, called at our house to pick up my father, *en route* to St. Briac.

I remember, one morning in 1895, my sister, a small child, leaning out of the top window of the villa and waving her handkerchief to the depressing brake-full below as it drove off. "Hurrah for the rowdy-dowdy boys," she cried to our horror.

Anything gloomier I cannot conceive than that brake filled with old and very dignified golfers who all looked so tired out, and as worn out (even before their exhausting game had begun) as the horses looked which were to drag these heroes five miles to the course.

I remember they smiled rather wanly at this unseemly behaviour ; even the old horses looked up surprised.

In the evening these dear old fozzles would tell their wives why they had fozzled the ball, and where they did it ; but not what they said . . . when they did it.

My sister, who in her childhood had saluted the golfers so frivolously, was very beautiful ; and in later life the great sculptor Rodin, who occasionally visited us in London, sculptured her lovely head in various poses.

My father always said that everyone should be able, on any occasion, to get up and make a speech ; or rather, to have the presence of mind to address any kind of audience, and to have the gift of expression.

A short time ago I attended a very graceful little ceremony, the celebration of the hundredth cricket match played between the two friendly schools, Eton and Winchester, at which the Provost of Eton and Warden of Winchester handed silver cups to the opposing teams.

Not much was said, but the words spoken by both these distinguished and educated men, conveyed the simplicity and charm of the English language at its best.

To listen to the Provost and Warden was indeed a lesson in oratory. What constitutes a good speech, to my mind, is for the speaker to say what he has to say as briefly as possible ; to be

earnest and genuine in his story, to be courteous to his audience, to pay particular attention that every word is heard by each listener, avoiding any shouting or harshness of voice (emphasis and strength of expression do not require this), to create laughter, and lastly, to think of your audience and not of yourself when speaking, and finish what you have to express in graceful language.

A few days ago I attended a dinner at a certain club in the country. The speeches after dinner differed from the addresses I heard at Eton, in this way: at Eton one went away thankful to have been present at anything so pleasing and dignified; here, each speech that we were unfortunate enough to be obliged to listen to, was a lesson in how not to speak.

None of the speakers were at all nervous.

One speaker spoke abruptly and brutally, as if his audience was hardly worth talking to.

He spoke chiefly about himself, blowing his trumpet so loudly that there remained nothing else to say, and then repeating the blast. If there was any point in the speech beyond self-praise, we missed it.

The only effect of such speeches on an audience is that those who hear him think that the speaker is a very vulgar fellow.

The next speech was delivered by an old man who had been knighted . . . I forget what for.

Grey hairs and knighthood call for dignity and humbleness in speech. The speaker was neither dignified nor humble. Our ancient and somewhat inebriated friend spoke huskily, and told us of his triumphs, and why others had been successful, and that was because he had been the means of their success.

If we laughed, it was because we wondered how anyone could continue to ramble on for so long, and secondly because his one funny story in the speech, was wittily told, although vulgar.

When he finally sat down we all felt that it was all undignified, and we were sorry for him. Such speakers make one nervous.

What is the moral of all this?

Let us say as regards the last case, that the ancient orator, to whom the *bon Dieu* had at least given a dignified appearance in his old age, had better have remained silent, or rather, have spoken as few words as possible, in which case some of his audience who knew him not, and surely would never see him again, might have said: "What a nice old fellow."

Therefore, unless you can speak without giving yourself away, Silence is Golden.

In England alone, we are allowed self-expression, or to let off steam unmolested.

Ever since I can remember, from Victorian days, I have seen near the Marble Arch, on a Sunday, tub-thumpers of all descriptions, declaiming from their high positions (on a tub) exactly what they feel about politics, religion, society, etc.

Some of these public speakers have the gift of the gab, and gather a crowd around them which, if not particularly enlightened by what they hear, are at least interested to see a fellow-man so worked up in his subject or "growse."

On the other hand, you see some visionary, speaking earnestly and with all the gestures of a fanatic, letting off this superfluous steam to the air, for no one has stopped to listen.

A few Sundays ago I saw a black man who was denouncing everyone and everything in a loud voice. We were all going to hell. He had, in his religious enthusiasm, worked himself up into a sweat.

His only audience, sitting on the gravel and facing this orator, with a goggly eye and a face of astonishment, was a pekinese.

Our dusky speaker wore a top hat, the true symbol of dignity and importance amongst the dark races of mankind.

So long as no stones are thrown at these gatherings, or heads broken, the police will guard and protect these tub-thumpers as if they were helpless children, which in mind many of them really are.

Other forms of letting off steam, perhaps less harmful and sometimes more painful, are by whistling and singing, painting, pictures, sculpturing, or writing prose or poetry.

Some years ago I discovered a 'cello in my stable. I took lessons on this instrument, a means of self-expression. It is true that the first results in my execution on the 'cello were not encouraging. A canary at my home, on hearing the deep notes, circled round and fell in a giddy faint amongst the chewed seeds on the floor of its cage. My, up till then, devoted dog, half-sealyham, half-foxhound, implored me with cries of anguish to stop playing; and when, on one occasion I invited my tiny daughter, Rosemary, to listen to an air I considered I played with some skill, the only remark my little audience made was: "Now, Daddy, you read your book."

But in spite of these disappointments I have steadily gone on bowing the 'cello for ten years.

Self-expression.

There are other avenues of self-expression more selfish than emitting sound, and they may be in the form of painting in futuristic style, and exhibiting such horrors.

Perhaps the loveliest way of all is in dancing.

Thus in our divers ways we let off steam. All we can pray is that in doing so we may be unselfish.


If we sing and whistle, or practise on the 'cello (the loveliest instrument in the world) until we excel, our kindest and least selfish method is to hie away to an empty room or isolated barn before we let ourselves go.

In the same way if we suffer from an abnormal mind, and paint in what is recognized as *ultra* modern style, let us do it in secret . . . and let the awful secret die with us.

CHAPTER XIV

BEFORE THE WAR

LORD HORNE AND THE NEW SCHOOL OF LEARNING—MOUNTED POLICEMEN—
GENERAL RAWLINSON—BAILLIE OF DOCHFUR—INVERNESS GATHERING
—GOOD-BYE ROSES

 IN the summer of 1911 I was Camp Staff Officer to Colonel Horne (Lord Horne), who was Commandant Royal Horse Artillery, Salisbury Plains.

It was a most splendid camp, and Horne and Colonel Kelly (Instructor of Gunnery) were ideal officers to work with.

All horse artillery batteries in England passed through our hands. It was a happy, joyous time in which everyone who came there, left Lark Hill filled with Knowledge of the New School of Learning. Red Tape did not exist.

Cavalry and machine-guns accompanied all batteries in their tactical schemes. Cavalry officers, including Sir John French, Allenby, etc., were continually present to witness the performance of these lighter guns at their exercises and firing. It was the birth of a new thought in the possibilities of horse artillery. And Horne was responsible for this.

While at camp, Bristol planes came to Lark Hill, and a school of flying was organized there. I flew in one of them over Salisbury Plains, piloted by the Frenchman Girouard.

The Military Mounted Police who were directed from Bulford, General Rawlinson's Headquarters, were utilized for disciplinary reasons on the Plains. Their method of keeping order was one of the most tyrannical and bullying nature I have ever witnessed.

For instance, a small crowd of about a hundred persons, civilians, came out on one occasion to see the flying. Two military policemen on heavy-weight troop horses, paraded up and down this collection of sightseers, driving them into a compact mass, which, for reasons of safety was quite unnecessary.

Their conduct in keeping the crowd back from the aeroplanes was offensive. I was standing near by, when a youth stepped out from the line of spectators and with his camera, was about to take a photograph of one of the planes. One of the military policemen charged him with his monstrous horse. The boy was ridden into, fell to the ground, and with a cry of dismay and with a broken camera, fled through the crowd. Not content with this entirely uncalled for and violent behaviour, the policeman dismounted, and leaving his horse loose, tore on foot in pursuit of the lad. The civilian youth now utterly terrified and bewildered at this assault, rushed past me.

I placed myself in the path of the pursuing policeman.

"Halt!" I cried. He was brought up with a jerk. "How dare you assault this civilian, are you mad? Give me your name, get on your horse and behave decently." The young civilian came up, and in hysterics *threw himself on his knees* before me, thanking me for coming to the rescue.

Two days later a cadaverous looking individual, introducing himself as Captain Rashbotham, Commanding the Military Mounted Police, called at my office. I asked him what he wanted. He said it was a very serious affair. Captain Cooke had interfered with one of his men when doing his duty. I said I was that captain, I told him that his policeman was not doing his duty: on the contrary he was exceeding his duty and was assaulting a civilian, etc.

As he left, Colonel Kelly said: "Did you say you commanded Military Mounted Police? Well, let me tell you this, if I see one of your —, — useless police anywhere near this camp, I'll have him juggled. Good morning."

In the middle of this Colonel Horne, my Chief, came in. He had overheard some of the conversation. He said: "Do you

dare to take the word of one of your men against that of my Staff Officer? Clear out." Rashbotham cleared out.

For days, long letters arrived from Rawlinson's Headquarters, complaining of my conduct in coming to the rescue of the civilian. Colonel Horne, as each letter came, told me to put it in the W.P.B.

Eventually I wrote a report in which I added : " Had General Rawlinson, the Divisional Commander, been present, and had he witnessed this outrageous conduct on the part of Trooper —— (the mounted policeman), he would have been the first to stop it."

As a matter of fact General Rawlinson *was* present, and was standing quite near me and witnessed the whole scene, *and I knew it.*

All further correspondence ceased.

There is nothing sound in such behaviour. Such conduct on the part of military mounted police, nowadays, would not be possible.

Colonel Horne at the termination of this camp wrote : " I am very grateful indeed to you for all the trouble you have taken to run the camp so successfully, and the keenness and energy which you have displayed. You have always gone out of your way to help me and everyone else. I am grateful."

SCOTLAND

In the Highlands, in the country places,
Where the old plain men have rosy faces,
And the young fair maidens quiet eyes ;
Where essential silence cheers and blesses. . . :

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

In 1911 I was up in Scotland as Adjutant Royal Horse Artillery, Inverness-shire. The battery and ammunition column of which James Baillie of Dochfour was Colonel, formed the artillery of Lord Lovat's Highland Brigade. I had not so far had any close touch with Territorials, and it was immensely

interesting to me to, at last, come in direct contact with members of these loyal, patriotic defenders of our beloved country.

James Baillie was a laird much liked and respected, with his 60,000 acres and highland homes of Dochfour, near Inverness, and Redcastle in the Black Isle. His wife, Baroness Burton, and children, were kind and human to a degree. No wonder I was happy with such people. I lived in one of Dochfour's farms above Loch Ness in whose deep waters the sea serpent of 1933 must have been at that time hatching out of his or her scaly egg, with the lovely hills going sheer up to a great height behind the farm. And in the midst of this splendid highland scenery, with this delightful family at the big house, Dochfour, close by, I was to remain until a few weeks after the declaration of the Great War.

In this far north home I made many friends : the Mackintosh, Camerons of Dounain, Lord Lovat, Ross of Cromarty, Maclains, Fraser-Tytler, Fraser-Mackenzie, Tulloch, a cousin of mine by marriage, and a host of others.

In the summer we occasionally played tennis. One day in 1912 the baroness and her sons Evan and Arthur and I drove over in the dog-cart from Redcastle to Rosehaugh. Our host met us at the door of this lovely highland house. He was a millionaire. Lady Burton, as she descended from the cart, addressed our host : " We've brought our own balls with us for this tournament as I remember the damned awful balls you supplied us with the last time I was here."

Our host received this news with a sickly grin. He had great regard for his neighbour, Lady Burton.

I partnered Lady Burton in the tennis, and we carried off first prize, mine in the shape of a large silver flask. Throughout the many victorious games we played, the baroness smoked cigarettes in a long holder in the corner of her mouth, whilst I chivvied round the court in pursuit of the ball.

Since those days I have, actually, seen better players at Wimbledon.

Once during the game of tennis at Dochfour the grass was

slippery ; Arthur, aged fifteen, wearing a kilt, slipped up. There were many rather prim and grim old scotchies grouped and gossiping round the court ; the baroness was working off a few neighbours in this way at the tennis party.

Arthur slid along the grass and lay there swearing quite a lot. Seeing her second son lying in considerable pain on the ground, Lady Burton called out : “ Arthur, have you hurt yourself ? ” “ Yes,” said he. “ Where ? ” says she. “ My ——,” he shouted. “ Well, get up,” says she.

Arthur wore nothing beneath the Baillie tartan, as was obvious to everyone that day.

The Inverness Gathering brought many up to the North for the games and dances.

At the Inverness Ball where many of the lairds were well “ liquored up,” these hardy Scots skipped about in their kilts. I remember I danced once with the lovely Zia Torby.

Throughout the winter months we shot the coverts and moors at Dochfour.

The Laird had his own race-course. In the early summer mornings at five-thirty Evan, Arthur and I helped to exercise the racing ponies. At that early hour you would see a string of ponies disappearing into the blue mist up mountain paths, or threading their way, at walking pace, through wooded glens. And always in this matitudinal exercise, as I mounted my pony, I thought of my snug, cosy bed at Lagnalean where I lived ; the lovely highland scenery was lost upon me as I nodded in my saddle.

Incidentally the purest English is spoken at Inverness. Every syllable is beautifully pronounced, and our language produced by the inhabitants of this far northern town is expressed in soft clear tones.

Many of the crofters and smallholders in the mountains speak Gaelic. The highlanders are simple, good fellows. The relationship existing between crofters and lairds is a very happy one. The laird’s sons, for instance, would be addressed by these rough, kindly folk as “ Evan ” and “ Arthur.”

I heard a beater one day telling Arthur Baillie of his shooting experience: "Arthur, I shot at twa cooshy doos and a capercailzie cock, but they didna stop."

Eventually I left this happy lovely highland home for the war. I had made my own rose-garden at the farm, and that August, 1914, they were magnificent in richness and colour.

As I closed the gate to my little garden on my departure south for the Great War, I peeped over the hedge and said: "Good-bye, roses."

I little knew as the gate closed that I was saying good-bye to very much more than my lovely roses; for nothing has ever been the same since . . . the little gate closed. . . .

CHAPTER XV

GOOD SOLDIERS AND OTHERS

SMITH-DORRIEN—WARDROP—CHARLES STIRLING—ARTHUR KIRBY—SIR
HERBERT UNIACKE—WINDBAGS' PUPIL AGAIN—"MY FATHER THE
GENERAL"—THE GALLOPING G.O.C.—FRICTION IN PALESTINE

Ah, God, for a man with heart, head, hand,
Like some of the simple ones gone
For ever and ever by.
One still strong man in a blatant land,
Whatever they call him what care I?
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat, one
Who can rule and dare not lie.

TENNYSON.



ONE of my officers in the war said he loved being in my battery, something always happened he said, some fun, and always before very long some frightful row.

Perhaps he was correct. We were never dull, but the rule held good in Peace as well as War.

I had always been intolerant of interference from an unsound source, and did not hesitate to show it, at the risk of my career as an officer. At the same time I had the very greatest respect for sound authority, and always had a high idea of discipline when serving under the right sort.

I was extraordinarily lucky to have served under exceptional men, and to have been in contact with officers of fine character. But such splendid men were few, and although fine feathers make fine (looking) birds, the confused rows of orders and medals, and the high-sounding names of many a staff officer and general officer, have left me very often extremely cold.

Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien I loved. When he died I wrote the following to the papers: "On the 26th of August, 1914, against desperate odds, in the hell and turmoil of battle, General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, casting aside every thought of self and of certain ruin to his career in the event of failure in his decision to stand and fight, faced an enemy of overwhelming strength, nearly three to one, with the courage and clear-thinking brain of the greatest of modern soldiers, and averted a crushing defeat on the British Army by his magnificent stand at Le Cateau.

I may speak of the little General as a personal friend, which he was to me in later life, but here will only say that to know him was to love him; that his forty-eight years of service as a soldier serving in countless operations in many countries, had left him in the evening of his life with that charm of character which I, at all events, find it difficult to define.

A man so intensely kind and thoughtful to all, and withal so human. In my early days at Aldershot General Smith-Dorrien was Commander-in-Chief. Smith-Dorrien was a student of war. He and General Grierson taught us all we knew, no other Generals need be mentioned when those two names occur.

The wonderful discipline of the 'Contemptible Army,' the rapid and accurate rifle fire to which our men had been trained, these triumphs Smith-Dorrien had instilled into the troops.

The British Infantry in 1914 was composed of troops second to none in the world for discipline and courage."

Then, of those I admired intensely and under whom I served, there were, Keppel Stephenson, Wardrop (Sir Alex. Wardrop), Charles Stirling, Arthur Kirby, Sir Herbert Uniacke, Sir S. C. U. Smith, the heavy gunner (and heavy-weight), Robinson and his capable Staff Officer young Imbert Terry (now alas, older) and Warburton, my Brigade Commander on the Somme, who wrote when I left the Somme: "You are a great loss to the Brigade."

I was always fond of Sir John Headlam, who was kind to me in India; and Lord Horne, to whom I had been Camp Staff

Officer in 1911, was a man I deeply respected as Commandant of Horse Artillery at Aldershot.

Lord Haig, Julian Byng and Sir Charles Monro were great men. That faithful old soldier Sir William Robertson; and last but not least my brother subalterns of old, Arthur Erskine and C. R. Bates, both earning their laurels in other parts of that terrible battle-field.

I can speak of no others I have any great reverence for excepting my brother in the Rifle Brigade, one time pupil of Windbags, who left England in 1914 with the first Expeditionary Force, landing in the first shipful as Brigade Major to Brigadier General Bulfin.

He was severely wounded fighting on the Marne. Recovering in six weeks from a perforated lung, he reoccupied his old chair at Army Headquarters as Assistant Adjutant-General; then Chief of the Administrative Staff 14th Army Corps under Lord Cavan; later Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General, and Administrative General Commanding Midland Air Force.

His former active services started early as Signalling Officer to the 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade not long after he joined, when he fought at the Battle of Omdurman and capture of Khartoum, 1896.

Then followed the South African War when he was shot through the arm in 1901.

A good soldier, sound, dependable, unostentatious; moving quietly and efficiently and honourably through thirty years of soldiering.

Twelve decorations for bravery and fine service rendered to his country only partly reward this officer who has steadily done his job, and pushed no one over in the doing of it.

How few there are who have not pushed.

Now this warrior is out of it. He catches moths and butterflies and caterpillars, and does so as efficiently as he kept the Barometer of Death in the Great War in Sir John French's office at St. Omer.

As regards ancient heroes, of course Lord Kitchener in the

hey-day of his career was the greatest soldier of his time. I only actually spoke to him once, in 1910, when he was Commander-in-Chief in India. I stood before this august personage ; he glared at me in silence with his chilly, penetrating blue eyes, long enough to make me feel the worm I was and the worm he obviously thought me, shook hands and strode away.

My brother, the apple of Windbags' eye, had more luck. Kitchener was interested in him, saw something of him in Egypt, and later gave him his nomination for Staff College.

One of several incompetent generals in the Great War, with whom I had fracas, was in appearance a "hell of a fellow."

On one occasion he and his family (for his civilian son and nephews decorated his staff) were riding down the Lens-Bethune road. A platoon of infantry marching down to the trenches was filling up the road, and impeding the progress of this rather self-important (and quite useless) general. His unsoldierly-looking son, in large spectacles, rode on ahead, and leaning over the saddle with his meek face, addressed the officer in charge of the platoon : "My father, the general, desired me to ask you to kindly move your men to one side of the road so that he can pass."

The platoon commander, having no intention of moving his men or doing anything about it, answered sympathetically : "And what does mother say ?"

I had unseemly rows with his "father the general" over some question of billets for my men, and another row when he threatened to come and inspect, at our busiest time, a column I commanded. On this occasion I telephoned to say that no men or horses would be in, therefore it would be wiser for him not to come.

There was quite a row about this.

I think Rudyard Kipling puts it like this :

"We were b . . . bothered about by old men,
Panicky, perishing old men
Who hamper and hinder and scold men
For fear of Stellenbosch."

Later he was invited to return to dear old England.

In the first weeks of 1915 we were settled in the trenches in the neighbourhood of Armentières with our guns well forward, close behind our infantry.

The observation post which I occupied was very carefully concealed and treated with extreme respect. The approach thereto and back was executed on all fours, by way of a short trench; a very secret spot.

On one occasion having crawled with considerable care on all fours in the squelching mud, strapped round with the usual war gear, telescope, field-glasses, maps and what-nots, I arrived at this, so far, entirely hidden observation post, to find an orderly with two steeds, one a white polo pony, standing up against the sacred O.P. in full view of the enemy. My exhaustive tummy-crawl was wasted. I at once ordered the horse holder to clear off and hide his horses.

Later that day, from our mess behind the infantry trenches I saw to my amazement a rider careering along the sky-line on the white pony, making for home. I shouted, "Hie, come here," with the intention of thoroughly "telling off" this inconsiderate horseman who exposed himself to the enemy with dire results to ourselves in consequence.

The rider turned his pony and rode full gallop at me. I recognized his foxy and infuriated countenance as that belonging to G.O.C. Division. He shouted: "I am sick of being hied by you damn gunners; I suppose it was you who ordered off my horses this morning." I stood my ground. "Yes, sir, they were 'giving away' my observation post." "Oh, damn you and your observation post," at which he shot away on his pony.

I turned to find my officers, who had fled at the appearance of this heated horseman, sneaking back and roaring with suppressed laughter at this rencontre.

Next week, sad to relate, a well-aimed enemy shell caught this thoughtless and violent gentleman, pony and all, with such force that there was nothing left . . . and no more trouble.

Moral. Do not, because you happen to be an officer commanding a division, and a somewhat showy horseman, ride on a white pony in the region of your men's trenches. Such conduct is likely to show up paths, approaches, etc., and other features which your troops, with infinite trouble and labour, have spent weeks to keep hidden.

Remember that such forms of advertisement may cost your men much shelling, after you have returned to safety and to your headquarters, miles behind the lines. If you must ride a white pony there are many fellow-men elsewhere who are ready to admire your horsemanship and the colour of your steed ; but in the trenches you will have no admirers, and your dauntless appearance will not only carry no weight, but will, on the contrary, be a source of horrid bad language on the part of Thomas Atkins who receives the shells, the result of your otherwise unsuccessful appearance and . . . exit.

In Palestine, where I was sent in 1917, I came under a territorial brigade commander, a brave and capable man. I quite saw, however, that his methods of running a brigade were not in accordance with the general methods, but that in many ways he commanded his brigade efficiently.

I, as Battery Commander, was keen to help him, but at times my patience was sorely tried.

For instance, soon after I came out to Palestine he deliberately transferred officers of my battery elsewhere without referring this to me. And when, absent a night, I found on return that he had taken my captain as his adjutant, I thought it high time to remonstrate with him.

We were on the eve of battle, and the efficiency of the battery would suffer if this continued.

He took my exception to the removal of my officers quite calmly, saying he could remove officers from batteries without consulting battery commanders. I replied firmly that as this was his opinion I would like to thrash out the question in the presence of the C.R.A. Division.

This was done a few days later, in a bell tent in the desert ; the three of us sat at a table.

I told the C.R.A. that I strongly objected to my officers being taken from the battery, for the working and high efficiency of which I was responsible. The C.R.A. agreed that it was unusual and he felt sure that the Brigade Commander would in future refer to me before so doing. The Brigade Commander agreed. The C.R.A. added that he felt sure also that I would do all I could to assist the Brigade Commander, and this I assured the two I had every intention of doing. The C.R.A. smilingly departed.

Next day a staff officer from Army Headquarters, a friend of mine, telephoned to me to say that I had been reported as " not getting on with my Brigade Commander." This was, of course, a perversion of the truth and likely to do me harm. I asked him from whom this untruth originated. He said the C.R.A. Division.

At the end of September, 1917, Allenby, commanding the Army in Palestine, having chiefly Territorial batteries, expressed a desire to see these untried guns cut wire, as so far the capabilities of these gunners were unknown.

To cut wire requires very careful and accurate shooting. It had been one of my especial duties to cut wire both at Loos and on the Somme battles, with effect. I had expended hundreds of rounds of ammunition in this intricate and difficult job, and had been successful, always observing myself.

In the evening before this wire-cutting took place, my Brigade Commander called up his Battery Commanders and lectured to them as to how the work was to be carried out.

The range, I think, was 2200 yards. Very many batteries would be engaged in cutting a gap of ten yards each, all along the line, in three-quarters of an hour.

The Brigade Commander told us that the only successful way was for each battery to bombard the wire with all six guns. I protested, saying that I considered the only way was to fire

with one section of guns, and if light and vision were at all difficult, to use only one gun.

He was quite annoyed and told me to go to the devil. I said I probably would, but in the meantime I would cut the wire as I considered best, and in my own way.

Next morning, soon after dawn, we were in position. A mist hung in the valley between us and the target, making the shooting exceedingly difficult. I used one gun and two careful layers.

Later in the morning the Commander-in-Chief, with many officers, rode down the line of wire to see the result of the firing.

No wire was cut all along the line, except a ten-yard gap which my one gun and accurate layers had penetrated. Otherwise the wire was everywhere quite intact.

The C.I.C. asked my name and I was consulted on the subject. The Brigade Commander never quarrelled with me again. Later on I succeeded our friend as Brigade Commander when he was wanted in France.

The Battery Commanders and all ranks under my command made up a fine fighting unit; and, what was important, the Infantry Commanders appreciated us. The Territorials in Palestine were splendid.

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PART TWO

To all the officers who served under me, to all the men . . .
Greetings and gratitude for their loyalty.

CHAPTER XVI

1914-1915

SIR HERBERT UNIACKE—LYON PLAYFAIR—PREPARATIONS FOR THE BATTLE
OF LOOS—HIGHLANDERS AND GUARDS—SERGEANT RAYNES, V.C.

Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them : Naught shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true.

SHAKESPEARE.



ONE of the Assistant Adjutant-Generals at the War Office, a very charming and able general officer, wrote to me as follows :

“ You went through a great deal, quite splendidly and earned a reward far more than many. You met wasters under you and over you and it couldn't have been otherwise when we think of what we were up against and how hopelessly unprepared. A war that no general staff had the faintest conception of.

Now, bury it. Don't let the smallest canker remain to your thoughts. When I realized that a vast number of officers were out all the time for their own advancement and jealous of others, it sickened me sadly.

The men's part was sacrifice, the officer's should have been, too. Those who think of it as such, the unrewarded, have the greater gain.”

A kind letter.

I have never been soured by the many adverse events in the war. There is no bitterness. I have written the events as they occurred, and if I have found fault with some senior officers, I

have at least given praise to others; and as for reward for serving my King and Country, I was rewarded beyond merit.

When one realizes the very many thousands of all ranks, who in patience and good courage gave their lives and neither claimed nor received reward, one can have but one feeling, and that one of thankfulness to God for His Mercy in preserving those of us who are left . . . from such chaos.

In November, 1914, the 5th Royal Horse Artillery Brigade—the brigade with which I went out to France—was in action close by Laventie. The armies had only recently settled into trench warfare.

Our colonel—Uniacke, the late Lieut.-General Sir Herbert Uniacke, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., C.B., C.M.G.—volunteered to assist our infantry as far as possible in repairing and digging trenches which had suffered severely from floods. It was our task, therefore, to go down in the winter nights with working parties and reconstruct these trenches and build redoubts, etc. Not a pleasant job.

Owing to the proximity of enemy trenches, in places about a hundred yards apart, it was possible only to work at night.

I shall never forget those nights.

Turning out in the bitter cold, crossing the open fields where so far no communication trenches were dug. Then a little further on, beyond the Rue Tilloy, wading over one's knees in the icy slush. All the time the sniper's rifle with its splitting report firing occasional rounds as we filed across the meadows in the ghostly moonlight.

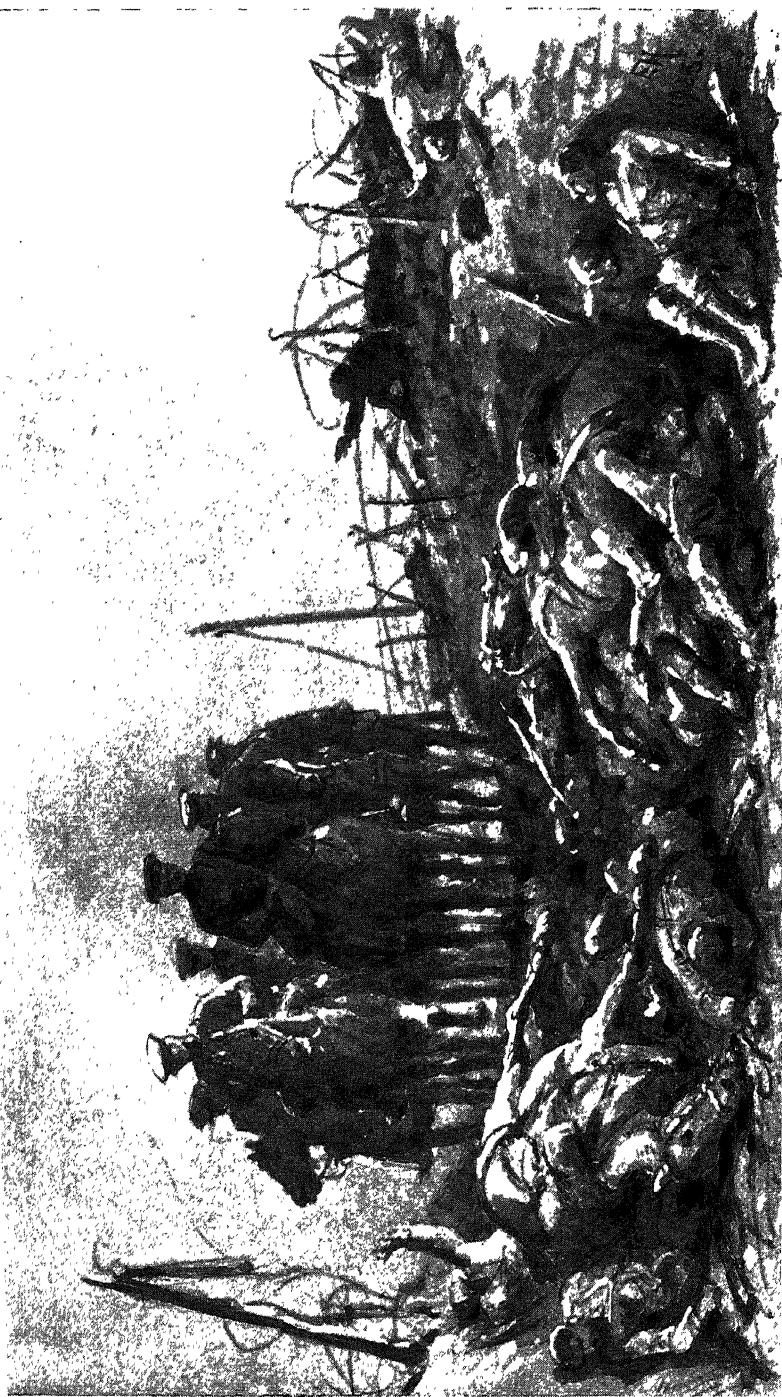
A four-hour task, and all the time the sniper's gun was busy; and sometimes a machine-gun or a small field-gun would be laid in our direction, and we would all throw ourselves down in the squelching mud with the bullets shrieking by.

And a man would sink down in the midst of his work where a shot found its billet.

Always on these nights my way led me through the village of Laventie, then practically deserted, with shattered homes exposing their household goods, where whole sides of rooms



AS HE VANISHED IN THE SMOKE HE WAVED A FLAG OVER HIS HEAD



TWELVE DEAD FELLOWS LYING NEAR TWO STRETCHED-OUT HORSES

were blown away; babies' cots and children's toys mixed up in the dismal mêlée.

Uniacke, in command of the Horse Artillery of the 8th Division, was a splendid fellow and a good friend. He was immensely tall and broad, a brilliant scientific gunner. He had been Commandant at Shoeburyness and during that first winter of the war he spent many hours and days experimenting with guns, fuses, and trench mortars, continually observing fire himself.

I very often accompanied him on his expeditions to observation posts. He was quite fearless. I remember one day crossing over a meadow close to our front line. His large form offered a splendid target, and after a rifle bullet had whizzed past my head he stopped and said: "Now I wonder, Cookie, where that damned sniper is hiding." The next shot was too near to be pleasant and I implored him to run and take shelter in some willows, but he just swung along with his long legs and refused to be hurried, whilst I scuttled behind a tree.

His headquarters were in the little village of Laventie, overlooking and comparatively near the Bosche lines, shells were continually dropping all round the château; it was the only experience we had in the war of 11-inch shells, and they sounded like express trains passing over one's head; in the hole they made on detonation you might have buried twenty horses.

One day the French owner of this château arrived with his wife in a car, and after inspecting his old home and the damage done inside it, confronted our Brigade Commander with a bill for thirty thousand francs—for damaged carpets, etc.

Colonel Uniacke, never a rich man, and unable to talk French, asked me what the trouble was. I told him. He grinned like a schoolboy and pulled out two empty trouser pockets. Anxious to get rid of these Frenchies (with their staggering bill) I hurried out, seized a piece of gun-cotton, tamped it, and at the end of a safety fuse fired it off outside in the garden.

The result was terrific: a deafening report and a huge glass conservatory entirely collapsed. I ran back to Uniacke and shouted: "Les obus qui tombent."

Our visitors never returned.

About Xmas time, 1914, I was given two days' leave to visit my brother at St. Omer, who, having recovered from wounds received whilst fighting on the Marne, had been installed for some weeks at G.H.Q. as A.A.G. to General Macready, the Adjutant-General.

I took this opportunity of looking up a very dear friend of mine, Lyon Playfair, who had served with me before the war during two of perhaps the happiest years of soldiering I ever spent; and this owing to the delightful comradeship of this boy who was much younger than myself.

Lyon Playfair, the only son of Lord Playfair, an old artilleryman, possessed that charm of manner which is difficult to define; the humble, unselfish nature added to a clear-thinking brain, which endears itself to officers and men alike.

In the hunting-field he was as fearless as he proved to be fighting in France.

Subconsciously he exercised an influence for good amongst us all which none of us will ever forget, and which he, in his simplicity and dislike for the sentimental, would be the last to own to.

I was not destined to see his cheery face that day or ever again. I discovered his quarters out there at Ploegsteert, but he was away observing fire, and although I waited as long as I dare with the Adjutant-General's precious car under shell-fire, I was obliged to move on without seeing him.

On April 21st, 1915, Lyon Playfair was killed at Ypres.

On the tablet erected to his dear memory in a little church in Suffolk I read the other day the following:

It said: "From a letter written by one of his men." "A finer Officer or better gentleman it would be hard to find." Humbly and truly expressed.

" . . . Bid us remember then what bloody sweat,
What thorns, what agony
Purchased our wreaths of harvest and ripe ears."

Prior to the Battle of Loos, 1915, my battery was in Vermelles. The gun emplacements were arranged in buildings, for the most part, immediately behind a low railway embankment. By sinking the guns so that the muzzles were on a level with the ground, and by fixing up artificial screens, etc., the flash of the guns was so concealed that for three weeks the position was never given away. The position was a particularly advantageous one, in that it was possible to observe the fire from a ruined house situated in front of the railway within forty yards to right front of No. 1 gun.

The detachments lived in cellars adjoining the gun pits; each gun emplacement was a fortress in itself, sand-bagged and splinter-proofed by iron girders and steel plates secured from the neighbouring mine-head.

At first we officers lived in a house within thirty yards of No. 1 gun. The row of small houses which constituted the position of the battery consisted of two-storied cottages, the roofs and walls mostly shelled in. However, the house we chose for the Officers' Mess was in good condition. The owners were a miner, his wife and daughter; the last cooked for us. We were received with open arms. The old lady had herself been severely wounded in the head and foot by a shell; the foot was now merely a stump. The daughter had been blown downstairs and turned upside down by a shell. Nevertheless, this sturdy family insisted on remaining bang up in front until obliged to evacuate by the French authorities about three weeks later, September 18th.

Whilst in action in the line at Vermelles, it was reported to me from headquarters that, somewhere in our neighbourhood, lamp signalling to the enemy had been detected. I made enquiries and found the report correct. A few days later, from a shattered village near by, there arrived a small Frenchman, an honest looking fellow, who wished to see Monsieur le Commandant. He was ushered into my office, the best room in a miner's cottage, which had been selected as my orderly room.

Our visitor appeared nervous. I attempted to put him at his

ease. Outside, beyond desultory gun-fire from distant enemy guns, and every now and then the rasping roar of one of my own 18-pounders, the night was exceptionally still.

In a whisper and with much hesitation and with furtive looks now and then at the door, my visitor announced that he knew from whence the signalling in our own lines took place, and could name the signaller who was, he said, an enemy spy. He told me the name of this spy, and his sobriquet—Le Soleil.

I decided there and then to myself investigate that night.

With two gunners as escort and the French informer as guide, I left my headquarters at midnight. It was very dark. Now and then the red glow of bursting shell lit up the trench lines; the village, half a mile distant, was in total darkness. The little village street lined with poor and shattered miners' cottages, seemed deserted and silent; no light showed anywhere, it appeared utterly lifeless.

We turned right, into a small, narrow street. There seemed to be nothing alive in this village. Presently our guide pointed out a miserable-looking house. I knocked at the door, there was no answer. I knocked again and waited, no answer. The silence was so intense that it seemed the cottage must be deserted. Our guide was insistent. This was Le Soleil's home. I tried the door, it was locked. I told one of the gunners to break open the entrance with the butt of his rifle. The door burst open at the second blow. Inside, before a glowing charcoal fire with arms outstretched over the fire sat an old woman. She had the appearance of a witch, a very ancient and withered old witch, and very *décolletée*: her skinny arms and breasts reflected the red of the fire, and thin wisps of grey hair fell disorderedly over her wrinkled face. She scarcely looked up as I came forward out of the shadowed doorway. "Le Soleil lives here," I said. "Where is he?" There was no answer. I repeated my question, she answered nothing, her eyes fixed on the glowing fire.

I noticed a ladder leading up to a loft in the corner of the room. Leaving the two gunners with the witch I climbed the steps

with revolver cocked, searched the attic with my torch, and returned to the room below. There appeared to be no one else in the house.

Again I advanced to the witch. "Where is Le Soleil?" "I know nothing," she answered.

I gave orders to my escort. They advanced with fixed bayonets thrust forward to within an inch of her naked and skinny chest. At this she shrieked in terror. "Where is Le Soleil?" I repeated. "Quick or you forfeit your life."

At this she moaned and rocked from side to side. Le Soleil was her son, it appeared. In abject terror she told us where he was lodged in hiding. We left the old witch trembling and moaning to herself.

At a little house further up the street I knocked at the door. After a little time the door opened a crack. A bald head appeared. I inserted a foot into the doorway before the man could close it again. "Que voulez-vous?" said Le Soleil (for it was our man). "Open," I said. "Monsieur —, I have come to arrest you as a spy." His consternation was obvious. He stood before us in a short flannel nightgown and used foul and fearsome language, to all of which I answered that he was a prisoner.

My two gunners took charge, and when it was daylight he was handed over to Divisional Headquarters.

On another occasion, in 1914, in Flanders, when visiting my horses at night just behind the lines, and carrying a stable lantern, I was fired on at very close quarters; it was a narrow shave, the bullet striking the wall immediately behind me. One of my men near by in the road shouted: "Are you all right, sir?" "Yes," I said. At that moment we heard steps in the road; we rushed out, threw ourselves on a man dressed in civilian clothes. It is true he carried no weapon. In spite of loud expostulation we threw him into a cellar and put a guard over him. We were taking no chances. Numerous spies had already been reported sniping behind our lines, and no civilians were allowed out after dark.

As it happened we had not juggled the right fellow that night. Our prisoner turned out to be the Mayor of Estaires. I am told his Worship's language after a night spent in a cold cellar (for it was snowing outside) was lurid and horrible.

That same week, just on the outskirts of the country town of Estaires, not far behind the lines, a motor car approached me as I sat mounted on my horse in the road.

On the front seat was a dark, swarthy-looking individual in French uniform who struck me as a suspicious-looking character. Too dark for France this face. I was not satisfied.

I ordered the car to stop and the officer to descend. Dismounting from my horse, I stepped on to the running-board and looked into the open window. I gazed into the jolly, smiling face of Père Joffre, Commander-in-Chief of the French Army. I began to apologize, but the C.I.C. with a hearty laugh only said: "C'est très bien, mon officier."

The foreigner on the front seat remounted, and they drove on.

As regards preparations for Loos, in the course of a few days we had completed a dug-out which consisted of a room boarded in, papered and fitted out with electric light, four and a half feet below a metalled road. The size of the room was fourteen feet long, nine feet across and six feet in height. A passage was tunnelled under the railway to lead to this dug-out, and an exit on the opposite side of it led to a cellar of the house which comprised the O.P. (Observation Post).

The O.P. was thoroughly strengthened, and I was given the assistance of 300 to 400 infantrymen to complete the task of converting the O.P. into a stronghold.

Observation of fire was made through a hole in the wall, and a fair view of the plain to the east and the Hun trenches was obtained.

Many hours were spent during this period in visiting the infantry trenches and in perfecting telephonic communication between guns and infantry.

We had received orders to cut the barbed wire with gun-fire

in front of the German front-line trenches, and to commence a bombardment on September 21st, a bombardment which was to last four days preparatory to an attack. Our orders were to ensure a passage being cut through the wire to enable our infantry to pass through on the day of the attack, also to prevent the enemy from mending it. One gun only was used for this purpose. Firing continued for four days and lasted eight hours each day. At this time the remainder of the battery was firing day and night at the rate of about 800 rounds a day.

On the second day of the bombardment the progress made by the wire-cutting gun had been so satisfactory that our task was considered sufficiently completed. Great gaps were made in the thick wire surrounding a sap, and posts and *chevaux de frises* were sent sky-high. The infantry expressed themselves satisfied, and their judgment proved later on to be correct, as the attacking infantry three days later passed straight through the wire without a stop.

Arthur Radcliffe, my senior subaltern, assisted me in observation of fire during all this time from a position in the infantry trenches about 300 yards from the German trenches. On one occasion, whilst we were assisting the Division, what was called a "Chinese attack" took place. This was an attack by rifle-fire and shell-fire by our own Division on the German trenches opposite, of which no warning had been given us by our own Brigade Staff, with the result that there was very nearly a disaster for Radcliffe, our three telephonists and myself. The Germans retaliated.

All of a sudden an intense rifle-fire took place to our immediate front, and the observation post was pitted with bullets. The iron plate holding the telescope through which I was observing was struck, and the whole place sang with bullets and pip-squeaks. I hurried my party into a dug-out built of sand-bags and heavy beams. We had scarcely got inside before three shells hit the base of the dug-out, a fourth shell burst on the roof, smashed in the roof of beams, and hurtled into the middle of us. Curiously enough no one was touched, although

there were five of us in the tiny place of refuge about ten feet square.

The objectives allotted to the 15th Highland Division were the German front-line trenches and second-line trenches with their right on Loos Cemetery inclusive, Loos village, and Hill 70.

The assault was delivered by the 44th and 46th Infantry Brigades in four columns, two from each Brigade, each column consisting of one battalion. The 44th were responsible for the front and support trenches, the second-line trench, Loos village and *Puit* 15. The 46th were to attack on the right of the 44th Brigade. The 47th and 1st Divisions were to carry out a simultaneous attack on our right and left respectively.

THE BATTLE

On September 25th, the morning of the attack on Loos, we bombarded with very heavy shelling from 5.50 a.m. until 7.5 a.m., at which hour our infantry, the gallant 44th and 46th Brigades, were to advance.

The scene at seven o'clock, just before the actual infantry attack, was weird in the extreme. In front one saw the open grass plain, intersected with white chalk trench lines, and beyond, in the early morning light, huge volumes of dense smoke were rising all along the line of trenches, while the red fire of bursting shells could be seen in all directions; the roar of hundreds of guns had been terrific, and now there was almost silence. All at once through the thick smoke we saw one solitary figure rise up on to the parapet. For many seconds this officer stood up alone, then as he vanished in the smoke he waved a flag over his head, and immediately the whole line of trenches was alive with human forms silhouetted against the dense background. The Highland Brigade was advancing. Just then an H.E. shell came smashing through the roof above us, and mercifully buried itself in the thick layer of sand-bags in the room. We lifted the fire of our guns over the heads of the infantry. Soon after this we ceased fire, as directed, and waited impatiently for

our next orders. At 8 a.m. I telephoned through to ask if I could ride out and reconnoitre ahead for a position for the guns. I was told not to. Not until 5.30 that evening did we receive orders to advance.

The 6th Cavalry Brigade came up, and their General (Campbell) and several of the officers, Cavalry and R.H.A., came in and refreshed themselves at our house. They were impatient, like ourselves, to push on. At 5.30 p.m. I received orders to reconnoitre a position about a mile ahead, to the south of some guns already in action. Radcliffe and I, a sergeant, the director man and three orderlies rode out. It was getting dark and raining pretty heavily. We groped our way through the remains of barbed wire and through the dead and wounded. The stretcher work had been very heavy. We passed many wounded who had been propped up, their legs strapped together. The sights and sounds were very heart-rending.

The position for the guns was chosen and a possible O.P. half a mile ahead in the now deserted German trench.

An orderly discovered me in the half-light and informed me that the O.C. Brigade had been looking for me. After much difficulty we found this officer in a dug-out in the trenches. I was informed that the message I had received earlier in the evening from the Adjutant was incorrect, and that I now had orders to go forward and select a position in the folds of the ground north of Loos.

To find a position for a battery in the dark in totally unknown country (a position which must be under cover) was, to say the least of it, no easy matter. No reconnaissance of any description had been made by the artillery in this direction.

With some difficulty we found our horses and reached the Lens-Bethune road. Here the scene was indescribable: chaos reigned everywhere. Transport and ammunition wagons stood at right angles to the road, horses and mules faced in every direction, the result being that the whole road was a solid block of men and horses, mules and carts of every description. There was no Staff Officer at this time to direct the traffic. A

little further up dead horses and mules lying across the road increased the obstruction. After great difficulties my party worked their way through and beyond the crowded road. We had left all signs of life behind, and only just ahead through the moonlight we heard the whistle of rifle bullets and occasionally the burst of shrapnel. A sharp turning to the left led us along an open, narrow road. Suddenly we pulled up. On the road, huddled up, were twelve dead fellows lying near two stretched-out horses. And everywhere to right and left one heard the moaning of the dying, crying for stretcher-bearers and water. I halted the party, and told them to wait until I returned. It seemed inconceivable that guns could come up so far, as rifle-fire sounded just ahead. I walked on up the road until I came to the buildings on the outskirts of Loos. I knew that my orders were to select a position, if possible the other side of Loos to where we were at that moment, and that there was nothing for it but to go on. I returned to my party, mounted, and we rode on.

We dismounted at the north-west corner of Loos, and left our horses and horse-holders under some houses, a few yards from the cemetery. In a very short time, with the help of the bright moon, I was perfectly satisfied that the hiding of the guns in a fold of the ground was an impossibility and that no convenient fold existed. I instructed Radcliffe to return to Brigade Headquarters and explain the position of affairs. I then made a further reconnaissance on foot with the Sergeant. During all this time, as we were walking across the open grass, we were being sniped from the direction of where our horses had been left. Presently the shelling became so bad that we were obliged to take cover in a trench. Then the shelling on the cemetery and on the house (under the walls of which our horses and men were sheltering) became terrific. We did not expect to see our men and horses again.

However, since I had left them, my horse-holders had noticed the sniping. They perceived that it came from the direction of the very house under which they stood. Further, they

noticed that the fire was directed on my sergeant and myself. Then a shell burst immediately on the house. At once a German carrying a rifle dropped out of a window above, almost on to my little party. Corporal Oakhill (the director man) and Driver Smith (my own horse-holder) seized upon the man and cuffed him across the head. The terrified German pointed distractedly at the house and cried out for mercy, and said that there were more men in the house. My two men, both of whom were unarmed, then told him to lead the way and show them where the others were. They called to the Germans to come out. Out trooped fourteen fellows holding up their hands. Oakhill signalled to some infantry reliefs who were by now beginning to come up to Loos. With the help of these men thirty or forty Huns were captured, rifles and all, and led away.

Soon after this Radcliffe, whom I had sent back to assist in bringing up the battery, returned. I then left him to carry on as best he could, and, taking with me Corporal Oakhill, started off on foot in search of the infantry front-line trench, from which I proposed to observe fire for the guns. The walk through Loos was none too healthy. The village was full of Germans, who had been overlooked by our infantry in their hurried advance, and as we walked up the village street sniping continued from house windows.

Eventually we issued from the east side of Loos and began to ascend Hill 70, which lay due east of the village. We found ourselves walking in the open between our infantry second-line trench and front trench. We were between two fires, and a couple of men immediately in front of me were shot down. Finding this too hot a corner I led the way slantwise up the hill, bearing towards what turned out to be the slag-heap. Oakhill and I crossed the railway at the foot of the slag-heap; we found a small dug-out in the bank, where the Colonel of the — Regiment was resting. He told me there was no position from which I could observe artillery-fire for more than a distance of forty or fifty yards ahead, which was a fact.

I then climbed to the top of the slag-heap and ducked down into the shallow trench. It was by this time about 4 a.m. Oakhill was to return to the position of the guns and guide the telephonists up to where I was.

This is the position I found myself in. The front-line trench which our infantry held at this time was three-quarters of the way up Hill 70. It extended on the left in the open grass, curved round to the right until it reached the railway, continuing the other side of the railway with a shallow trench dug in the coal dust on the top of the slag-heap. On the slag-heap the British and German trenches were between thirty and forty yards apart. At each side of it a laurel hedge led from the German trench to ours, along which the Germans endeavoured several times to creep, but machine-guns well posted shot them down as they appeared. We kept up a rifle-fire for the next few hours, and as a Hun head appeared I assisted with my revolver until, overcome with fatigue, I fell asleep with my arm on the low parapet in front, my weapon at full cock.

At about 6 a.m. (September 26th) Oakhill returned with two telephonists to report that communication by telephone was established. We found a small shelter in the bank of the slag-heap a short distance in front of our infantry front line, and here the telephone party remained. This point was situated between our front line and the Germans—a somewhat curious position. Very soon after this the telephone wire was cut. Gunner Ellis then went down in the open to endeavour to mend it. At 8 a.m. preparations for a further attack to straighten out our line were to begin.

Just previous to this I resolved to go back to the battery, my means of communication with it having been severed. All at once the Germans began shelling our trench: the trench was so shallow that we were obliged to lie one on top of the other to gain shelter. The shells dropped nearer and nearer, fired from a very short range. It was impossible to observe, or to see anything from our trench, beyond a distance of about fifty yards up the slope.

The Colonel of the — had asked me to get into touch with the heavy artillery observing officer. I got out of the trench and started down the hill. Just then the — Division, who were to make the attack, issued from the east road of Loos. At once they were subjected to a withering fire. Three times, while I looked on, these troops, fresh from England, dead beat and unfed, broke back.

I walked through them, never expecting to reach the houses of Loos, through a rain of bullets.

As I came up to the houses I could see the brick-dust shivering on the red brick walls as the machine-gun bullets struck them. Behind a wall I discovered two officers, and in a house a little further along I saw a gunner officer, but they could not tell me the whereabouts of the heavy artillery officer. They told me it was just possible that he had been up in the Tower Bridge, but nothing living could be up there then as they were shelling the towers to hell.

I then decided to get back to my guns. For a short distance I worked my way through holes in the walls of houses which the Gordons had made in their advance (the work of the Highlanders was excellent and thorough all through). When I got into the street the scene was very terrible. Shells were bursting in every direction here; the way was simply strewn with dead. Luckily I took a wrong turning or I could never have succeeded in reaching my battery. Presently I arrived at the cemetery; a machine-gun was playing on the road I had left, and as I emerged on the other side of the cemetery the machine-gun followed me up, the bullets hissing all round me. I lay down in the grass. It is possible I was seen to fall; at all events the fire slackened, then I looked up and saw my guns two hundred yards away and ran towards them. It was a great relief when I saw my men wave to me. I was very exhausted.

On reaching the battery I at once took charge. Up to this time (10.10 a.m.) the guns had had instructions to fire by timetable (in case our means of communication were cut off), and were shelling the woods to the north of Hill 70.

I at once got all guns laid on to the summit of Hill 70. Just then an orderly from the infantry rushed up with a message to ask us to fire immediately on the very place on which we had just commenced to fire—the Germans were massing just over the crest of the hill.

For one and a half hours a steady rate of fire was kept up with H.E. and shrapnel on the reverse slopes ; the laying was excellent, and I cannot speak too highly of the discipline at the guns during this critical time. No excitement prevailed ; the subalterns, N.C.O.s and men were going about their different jobs quietly and quickly under a perfect hail of shell. Three or four German batteries had concentrated their fire on us and a machine-gun enfiladed us on the right. Splinters were flying everywhere and shells poured down each side of the battery.

The position of the battery was this. The guns had been placed close by Fort Glatz on the open grass, just behind a German trench. There were some small straw stacks near this spot and the guns had been rigged up in straw before daylight to resemble the stacks. The position was about five hundred yards in the rear of our infantry trenches on the north-west edge of Loos, at the bottom of the grass slope which ran down to the village. Behind us again there was *no other infantry* for a distance of nearly three miles.

Although later on our guns were spotted out there in the open, there is no doubt that for a time the disguise thoroughly deceived the wily Hun. Observation was made from behind the limber of No. 2 gun. The shrieking of shells overhead and the noise of the guns firing made the passage of orders difficult, but the firing never stopped until 12.30 a.m., when all ammunition was expended. Two orderlies had been sent to endeavour to get up more ammunition. At about 9 a.m. Radcliffe volunteered to walk back a mile and a quarter across the open—a perilous walk, as the whole hill-side and plain beyond were under shell-fire. He arrived at Brigade Headquarters, but was unable to obtain any assistance. The Artillery Brigade Com-

mander was completely out of touch with his forward guns and could suggest no means for a supply of ammunition.

The Highlanders of the 15th Division carried yellow flags to mark their progress, and these flags marked the trenches as they were captured. Although this method of indicating the most forward position captured by our men is not altogether satisfactory as a rule, I am bound to say it worked admirably at Loos as far as my battery was concerned: there was no mistaking the exact position of our infantry.

During the morning and early afternoon the new reinforcements were unable to face the very severe fire opposite Hil 70. Although many rallied, for the most part the troops fresh out from England, suddenly plunged after a long exhausting march straight into one of the fiercest battles of the war, turned and fled. They streamed back on each side of the guns. A Staff Officer (the first one we had seen since our arrival at Loos) rushed out from a trench shouting to me: "For God's sake fire on the Germans coming down the hill!" but I had been watching very closely, so I answered him: "No, most certainly not; they are your own men." Wounded men came through us and told us how effective our fire had been on the hill, that it had prevented the Germans from massing, and had fairly bowled them over. As our battery was the only one firing at the time, we were naturally immensely gratified. The shelling on our guns was so heavy that as soon as we had expended all the ammunition I ordered the men to get into the trench about twenty yards in front of the guns. Only one man had been shot through the hand by the machine-gun all this time. And when it is considered that three or four German batteries had concentrated fire on these four British guns in action in the open, it would appear that we were indeed favoured by the gods that day.

At about 4 p.m. it seemed that a general retirement was taking place. One of the officers handed me my revolver; this was a very trying moment. All the morning we had been in extreme danger of being captured. I ordered the men to take out breech-blocks and take up their kits. Just after this

I received an order from O.C. Brigade to retire the guns to Fosse 8. This order showed complete ignorance of the state of the one road available. No horses could have been brought up in daylight, nor were horses permitted to pass that way, so that the guns could not be moved until night. I ordered Thompson, the second subaltern, to take the men back to the wagon line in extended order. After we had walked a part of the way up the slope in rear, Radcliffe and I turned back, so as to remain as guard over the guns. The whole hill-side was pitted with "coal-box" shells which followed my men up the hill. Radcliffe and I felt very lonely. When it became dark Hun snipers began sniping at us from behind, which was extremely disagreeable. At 8.30 p.m., when shell-fire slackened, the teams came up, and right glad we were to hear them on the Loos road.

Lieutenant Thompson and Lieutenant Denniston successfully pulled the guns out of action without a casualty.

The attack by the Highland Brigades of the 15th Division on the previous day will be a matter of history. Nothing finer or more magnificent can be imagined in the annals of war than the charge of these Jocks as they rushed full tilt into Loos, and beyond, actually entrenching themselves on the far side of Hill 70. I saw many dead and wounded, hundreds of them, and one realized with what grim determination the old Jocks had charged on. Round my guns fifteen silent forms lay stretched, the officer in front, with his arm outflung and revolver pointed. Behind him one of his men, in the act of taking aim, his finger about to press the trigger, had been pierced through the forehead by a bullet. Further back still a Cameron Highlander lay full length on a Hun, gripping him by the throat. These Highlanders were equal to the finest and most highly trained troops in our service.

And so when the last gun had been dragged safely out of that place of death, and our vigil was over, Radcliffe and I trudged wearily up the hill in the dark across the battle-strewn, battered stretch of country under the merciful cover of night.

The guns were to return to the wagon line close by our old billets, which were now occupied by the Welsh Guards.

As the Guards' officers had taken possession of our lately vacated rooms we felt homeless, and wondered how and where we could rest and feed that night. We were desperately tired and ravenous.

Arrived at the billet, we were met by the Adjutant of the Welsh Guards. He welcomed us back, much to our surprise and relief, and informed us that his Colonel insisted that we should come in and partake of food.

Furthermore, he insisted on our resting that night in our old rooms, turning his own officers out to share other rooms in order that we might enjoy his hospitality to the full.

How we blessed the C.O. for his kindly consideration! Then, before we knew where we were, we found ourselves surrounded by these good fellows.

I remember the dazed feeling I had when dragged out of the dark night into the lighted room full of these cheery young officers, who forced priceless food (fresh from "Fortnum and Mason") down our throats, and listening to the pleasant voice of Colonel Murray-Threipland.

Next day these brave fellows—veterans some of them—were to lead the Welsh Guards into their first battle as a regiment.

Needless to say, they distinguished themselves and added still more glory to the glorious Guards' record.

I always remembered that night, it was out of hell into heaven for us two.

And so ended the first phase of the battle of Loos.

Yesterday, in the early morning, how cheered and victorious we had felt! This elaborately planned forward move, this huge offensive which had taken weeks and weeks to mature, whose object lay in capturing the high ground beyond Loos and forming a wedge in this direction to ultimately break through the German line, had triumphed so far.

Everyone had reason to rejoice at the magnificent success of

the Highlanders, who had achieved the task allotted them by capturing Loos and Hill 70 redoubt beyond it, which was the key of the position.

I remember at 8 a.m. dancing with joy at the successful turn of events.

Major A. Campbell and his Highlanders were in occupation of the redoubt and the forward trenches on Hill 70.

Therefore up to that point everything had been achieved by 9 a.m. on the morning of September 25th. But those trenches which had been so gallantly taken by the fury and impetus of the 45th Highland Brigade were being desperately held.

When were reinforcements coming?

A small number of Highlanders actually advanced beyond these trenches, but coming under withering machine-gun-fire, which swept them from the windows of houses in the outskirts of Cité St. Auguste, the few survivors were obliged to retire to the already occupied trenches in front of the redoubt.

Our batteries, straining at the leash to push on and help the Highlanders, had received no orders to advance, nor were orders ever received until too late in the day. And reinforcements ordered up by G.H.Q. failed to come up until the *following morning* at eight o'clock, at which hour they endeavoured hopelessly to charge up Hill 70, but, being repulsed, failed to support the occupied trenches.

So that from 9 a.m. on September 25th until 8 p.m. on September 26th a thin line of exhausted Highlanders had managed desperately to hold on to the hill although the redoubt on the crest was lost.

Nor did these Scotchies have any relief until the night of the 26th, when General David Campbell led his 6th Cavalry Brigade, horses and all, into Loos, dismounted at the cemetery, and filed his men into the trenches.

The New Army divisions which had been sent up too late had scattered to the four winds.

Thus, thanks to the tardiness of those responsible for carrying out Sir John French's orders in the matter of reinforcements,



ROUND MY GUNS FIFTEEN SILENT FORMS LAY STRITCHILD
(Sketch by L. Raven Hill)



THE SLIGHT FIGURE OF A YOUNG GUARDS OFFICER LEADING HIS DEVOTED MEN

EHG 1925

Loos, 1915, was a striking failure instead of being a brilliant success.

On the following day, September 27th, having taken up our new position, Arthur Radcliffe and I went along the lately vacated German trenches in search of a suitable observation post. This O.P. was finally selected about one mile in front of the guns, overlooking Loos. During our wanderings amongst the old German trenches, Radcliffe suddenly shouted out that there were some Germans following us. I whipped round, and found I had no revolver. Four Germans, miserable specimens, appeared. Radcliffe, who spoke the language well, shouted to them to throw up their hands; this they did, shrieking for mercy. Radcliffe marched them off under an escort of two telephonists armed with a shovel and a billhook. The little party was received with cheers by the battery. One of the prisoners presented Radcliffe with a pair of Zeiss glasses. For many days Germans still lay concealed in these trenches. The dead, British, French and German, lay everywhere unburied.

On Monday, September 27th, a further attack by the Guards Division took place. A terrific bombardment commenced at 2 p.m. I was observing, as usual, with Radcliffe; our O.P. was frightfully shelled. A large piece of shell struck me in the shoulder, cutting through my coat and shirt, and only scratching me. Our O.P. was a German officers' dug-out on the edge of the hill overlooking Loos, an off-shoot of the German rear trench. The dug-out contained a large bed, sheets, arm-chair, table, big looking-glass, and was most comfortable. We made use of it for about two weeks. It was a great sight to see the Guards pour over the hill down into Loos. Many of them climbed over our O.P.; I helped to hand up two or three machine-guns, and to give the attacking party their general direction of advance. What splendid fellows they were; one hated to think that many would not return. We could see the whole attack, and as they swept up the opposite hill we lifted our fire. Three times they charged up the hill, but although they captured *Puits* 14 once more, no troops could withstand

the enflading German machine-guns, so the Guards had to be content to man and consolidate the trenches in Chalk Pit, which we had already occupied. There were many casualties, and the German machine-guns on Hill 70 had done their work and had enfladed the Guards as they advanced on the *Puits* at the end of Bois Hugo. It was all so near, we could see every detail of that gallant charge up the slope.

The rattle of arms, the roar of guns, the whirl of charging men; the slight figure of a young Guards officer leading his devoted men, himself fifty yards ahead, never hesitating but facing certain death.

The Furies let loose on a handful of heroes who never flinched!

Then, how well I remember it! The intense hush, the dense smoke lifting to reveal silent forms stretched out on the green hill—nothing else.

One fleeting spectacle of heroism in this endless drama of death and destruction.

Later in the evening we saw one poor wounded fellow of the 1st Scots Guards lying out in the grass between the British and German trenches. He crept on hands and knees from one corpse to another until he found a water-bottle, then he took a long drink and sank down again.

For reasons which I find it hard to define it struck me, as the fighting went on, that the Brigade of Guards immediately to our left front might not be in close touch with the rest of their division.

I telephoned through to my Brigade Headquarters and the answer was not reassuring, so I resolved to make certain on this point.

Leaving Radcliffe in charge of the observation post and calling for a volunteer (who was immediately forthcoming), the young orderly and I climbed out of our trench and crossed a rather unpleasant quarter of a mile or so of open grass downland which descended to the outskirts of the village of Loos.

Our way was pretty freely sprinkled with shell; and as we

approached the outlying shattered houses we held our weapons very much at the "ready," for German snipers frequented many of the outbuildings.

To the east of the village we presently found the little shelled cottage whose cellar formed the headquarters of the Guards Brigade in question.

Here we discovered the Brigade Major, the doctor, the officer in charge of communications, and General Ponsonby, the gallant old leader.

I talked to the latter, and found that my surmise was correct ; the Brigade was utterly out of touch at that time with Divisional Headquarters owing to the lines being cut, and they were badly in want of help.

Casualties were very heavy, and altogether they were feeling rather desperate.

Ponsonby was grateful for the help I was able to give in eventually connecting them up with their Division through my own Division.

I stayed a short time and chatted to the Brigade Commander, whose acquaintance I had made in Cairo, where years before he had commanded a battalion of the Coldstream.

He was lying on a bare mattress on the floor of the cellar, utterly exhausted after a spell of handling his men in a desperate encounter on the hill opposite.

He was charming and courteous as always.

The Welsh Guards proved their metal that day and behaved with gallantry. When light was fading and shelling had relaxed, Radcliffe and I started for the battery. Part of the walk from O.P. to battery took one through the old Hun trenches, at that time stinking of gas and with a good sprinkling of dead Germans in them. Part of our way led across the open grass plain ; a particularly unpleasant part of it existed at the space between the British and German lines, now deserted, and here corpses lay pretty numerous, some six months old, mere skeletons.

That evening we found the sergeant-major and a corporal of

the 1st Scots Guards Battalion making their way back wounded, and we helped them in and conducted them to the dressing station. I shall never forget that walk : the long and awful September day of blood and confusion had nearly given out, and in the half-light as we struggled back across country supporting this big and splendid-looking sergeant-major between us, his arms round our necks, we came in view of the Lens-Bethune road.

What a procession to behold in that dim half-light. Officers and men in herds, all wounded birds, limping back with wounds of every description. The tramp of men faint with exhaustion ; no one spoke. Tramp, tramp of splendid manhood seeking relief from pain of shattered limbs ; men helping officers ; officers of those brave Guardsmen with their arms supporting their faithful men.

And in the midst (perhaps the most pathetic form of all) a large draught horse of the beautiful kind we so often see ploughing in our own dear country, with heavy mane and gentle eyes, quite unattended, moved with the crowd as fast as the dreadful wound in its side permitted . . . away from those shrieking shells.

Quite soon they would reach the advanced dressing station where wounds of men would be cleansed, the dumb and patient animal eased from pain.

COMMANDEERED

Last year he drew the harvest home
Along the winding upland lane ;
The children twisted marigolds
And clover flowers, to deck his mane.
Last year . . . he drew the harvest home.

To-day . . . with puzzled, patient face,
With ears a-droop and weary feet,
He marches to the sound of drums
And draws the gun along the street.
To-day . . . he draws the guns of war !

L. G. MOBERLY.

The Guards Division had 2000 casualties that day, not such a toll as one feared at the time.

On September 29th we were informed that the battery would be taken back to rest, but that promise (like many to follow) of a well-earned rest, which our men needed, was not to be realized until weeks afterwards.

Other guns had suffered severely, and we were required to assist another Division. The whole of the 15th Division, with the exception of the field artillery brigade and some howitzers, were now withdrawn to rest.

By this time the battery was more or less settled in a position previously selected by the R.A. Brigade Staff. This position was situated in a salient and in the open. This speaks for itself. The guns were placed along a trench, the parapet of which afforded a little protection—iron rails placed side by side leaving no space between, with earth on top, formed head cover to the emplacements. The men lived in dug-outs, deep and, as one hoped, fairly secure. A cellar under a house a few yards away served for the Officers' Mess, the men's cook-house being next door.

Communication by telephone was established with the usual care and efficiency of detail by Radcliffe. This officer all through was responsible for the telephonic communication, and his work with the help of the telephonists was extremely effective. The wire was laid very often necessarily in the open ; necessitating as it did the laying of some miles of wire, one can realize the constant risk the job entailed. Radcliffe and his men were continually called upon to go out exposed to very heavy fire to mend the wire if cut by shells. Their conduct in regard to this was praiseworthy to a degree. It took four whole days to lay out the great length required for extra security, and when it is understood that this was done under fire, and that the zone was continually changed, it is not surprising that nine of the fourteen telephonists were wounded—three of this number very severely.

On one of these days the battery was particularly badly shelled

and gas came sweeping down on us. It was necessary to bring up more ammunition, and as teams could not come up to the guns, owing to the shelling, it had to be dumped down behind some houses. It was difficult, with the few men available at the guns, to get this ammunition conveyed up to the battery position. Twelve men of the 1st Battalion Gloucesters volunteered without hesitation to assist, and very grateful we were for their help.

Shelling on the battery was very severe, still these good fellows worked on, carrying rounds of ammunition across the open. One man fell down gassed, but got up and insisted on going on with the work until he again fell down exhausted, when he was dragged away by the battery sergeant-major. This splendid behaviour under fire was mentioned. They named us the "Glos'ter Battery" in recognition of our assistance in an attack.

We were now exposed day and night for nine days to German shells, frontal and enfilading fire: occasionally 10-inch shells and armour-piercing shells, a severe strain on the men who were already much in need of rest.

On October 8th at 11 a.m. an unexpected counter-attack took place by the Germans, who started a tremendous bombardment all along our infantry trenches and on our batteries and observing stations; the bombardment increased in violence as the day went on.

Our guns retaliated. I was with the battery at the time, but at 2 p.m., as an attack by Huns seemed imminent, I crawled up a communication trench to the observing station and joined Radcliffe, the F.O.O. The whole valley of Loos was shrouded in thick smoke, the shelling all round us was very violent, and I saw the roofs of one or two houses below us in Loos literally lifted off by big shells. By telephone I ordered all men to don gas helmets, and this was as well, as gas shells were falling round the battery and at the observing station.

Gunner Stepney, at one of the guns, was severely wounded in the head, and Gunner King, who ran out to warn some men to put on their gas helmets, was shot in the head. Apparently

the Germans had made a determined attempt near Bois Hugo and Hill 70. The noise and smoke of hundreds of guns was appalling. Nine German battalions had suddenly been brought up. They made four attacks, but were unable to cross into the open, the gun-fire and machine-gun-fire preventing them from issuing beyond the front edge of the woods and *Puits* 14. As they massed behind the *Puits* we concentrated all guns on to them, and they were literally mown down. Our infantry in the trenches stood up on the parapet with machine-guns and fired point-blank at the closely packed bodies of Germans.

To describe what I saw from my observation station.

I suddenly espied straight in front of me a tall grey uniformed German officer coming down a grass drive in the Hugo Wood.

I concentrated my field-glasses on this forbidding form, and looking beyond, I discovered one or two more grey figures, and suddenly realized that the Germans were pouring down this avenue and settling into some trenches near the fringe of the wood which they obviously supposed were concealed by the trees.

I could see one man wiping the barrel of his rifle; another buttoning up his coat as he took up his position.

Already the avenues through the wood swarmed with Germans.

My subaltern reported what I saw by telephone, and so the news was spread, and as swiftly were our guns distributed to deal with this Hugo Wood, now a living target.

In a few seconds the order came up—and it was clear.

Our light guns would account for the front fringe of the wood, the howitzers the centre of the wood, the heavies would barrage the rear of the wood so that no one could go back, whilst the French 75's would storm the right flank.

At a given moment with a deafening roar a hundred guns crashed into Bois Hugo.

The result was ghastly—they were caught in a veritable trap.

Thirty-one Huns only attempted to cross to Chalk Pit Wood in the open, but nearly all were killed. One reached the British

trench. This man ran across to our trenches with his hands up, carrying no rifle, and was chased through the wood at the end of a bayonet. His life was spared. His version of the story was that he was the sole man who had made a real attempt to obey orders; these were to recapture all ground lost. There were, as stated before, nine battalions to do this.

Our four batteries were, on the following day, congratulated and thanked for the "conspicuous part played in the recent operations." This was gratifying, since it was the second time in about ten days that the Brigade had been congratulated, the first time as a result of Loos, when the wording had been "particularly those batteries which had been pushed up forward."

Two days later another observing station had to be chosen to enable us to observe fire further to the north. This was extremely difficult, and about three more miles of telephone wire had to be laid out for communication. That day the French made a tremendous bombardment on our right, and were successful in recapturing a lost trench. The Germans retaliated very heavily with big shells, and picked out my battery for particular attention.

While I was observing, messages kept coming through that my guns were being heavily shelled, and the shelling over our heads was severe. I ordered all the detachments, except the men at the gun which was engaged in wire-cutting, to go to ground. Then a message came through that Sergeant Ayres had been wounded, followed by another to say that Sergeant Ayres and six men had been buried by a shell and that endeavours were being made under great difficulties, owing to the heavy fire, to extricate them. The wire-cutting gun continued firing. Eventually poor Sergeant Ayres and six gunners were dug out of the debris. Ayres and four gunners were killed, and two others, who had been buried, were dragged out bruised and terribly shaken. Another gunner was then severely wounded. This accounted for the whole of one gun detachment. All the men of another detachment were gassed, and men were wounded

at all the remaining guns. The gun position was a terrible sight, the ground everywhere was torn to pieces by big shells.

That day's loss we could never replace. Sergeant Ayres was the cheeriest and pluckiest fellow in the world. I heard him at Loos in the heat of action say, with a laugh: "This is the hottest thing I've ever been in. If we get through this we'll always celebrate September 26th." Ayres was an old soldier, old in experience, though not actually in years. He was only thirty-two, and he had served in the Marines. We all loved him, and the men felt his loss and the loss of their other pals tremendously. We buried the poor fellows that night in one big trench, a minister representing each religion (Church of England and Roman Catholic) assisting at the sad little ceremony.

Then followed another bad day for my little battery. The Germans started at about 10 a.m. shelling us with great accuracy. Casualties amongst the men occurred immediately. The detachment at No. 3 gun had just received orders to get to ground when a heavy shell (10-inch) plunged down and blew this gun clean up in the air, large iron girders and all. The gun was now merely a piece of scrap iron, twisted and distorted, and perched up on the parapet, an iron girder close by sticking into the ground like an arrow shot from a bow; everything blown to atoms. Immediately afterwards No. 4 gun pit was blown in.

Shell after shell came raining down on the battery with wonderful accuracy. A few minutes later another huge armour-piercing projectile landed on the three-storied house used as our cook-house. The roof was absolutely lifted off, the walls crumbling in and burying sixteen of my men.

Sergeant Raynes, who had particularly distinguished himself that day and shown remarkable coolness, was himself buried under the house. Although bleeding in the head and wounded in the leg he extricated himself and dug out Sergeant-Major Austin, severely wounded. He carried him across the road to a dressing station and returned to help others who were buried. The previous day, when Sergeant Ayres was shot in the leg,

Raynes ran out in the open, carried Ayres to a dug-out and, noticing that he had no gas helmet on, stripped his own off and placed it over the wounded man's head to protect him from gas shells, which were falling all round. I recommended Raynes for bravery, and he was awarded the Victoria Cross. Eight of the sixteen men buried under the house were suffering from wounds. All were badly shaken.

The whole battery was one great horrible mess. Wagons lay overturned and ammunition was strewn in every direction.

For a short period I was actually left alone with my guns, as I was obliged to send *the whole of the personnel* (at that time in the firing line) away to the dressing station. Two of the officers were still at the observing station—we had used two that day—and I had hurried back to the guns on hearing of these casualties in the battery. Denniston had been a great assistance during this time. None of the officers were touched.

We managed next day to assist in an attack on our left, no small achievement under the prevailing conditions. On that day Radcliffe had a slight "go" of gas, and three of the telephonists on their way home were rather badly gassed. Although for the third time we were told that we should get a rest, this was cancelled as before.

Two days later I was told that now I might prepare a position for the battery in the gardens close at hand (the position I had previously begged repeatedly to be allowed to occupy). Having nearly completed two of the gun pits, we were told we should not occupy this position, but were now going to be given a little rest. This time, at all events, I was assured that we should be taken out of action on the following night, to enable me to look into the detail of the personnel and equipment and overhaul the battery generally. The General came to see us and congratulated me on the performance of the battery: "No battery could have done better, and I shall tell your men this." This, however, he forgot to do.

That same evening all orders as to rest were cancelled for the fifth time in about three weeks. We were now to alter our

position and take over from the artillery of the 1st Division. It was with feelings of sorrowful regret that I went to see my men and had to announce for the fifth time that there could be no rest. The disappointment was, I know, acute, but the fine discipline which never relaxed and which had carried us through in very trying moments in the course of twenty-six days' fighting asserted itself. This constant contradiction of orders, however, the continual change of zones, entailing the laying out of many miles of wire, with numberless orders and counter-orders, were, even if necessary, difficult to grasp.

The previous evening, during a pause in the firing, I had gone to No. 3 gun to examine the sights. As I was looking over the sights a 5.9 shell burst immediately in front of the muzzle of this gun. I ordered all the men to take cover in the trench which lay about thirty yards behind the gun position. No sooner had they cleared out than the shelling became universal all round, many shells falling amongst our guns, and others on the road and near the houses close by.

As I watched from the trench, where I had also taken cover, I saw two French *artilleurs* on the road bowled over; one was killed and the other apparently not, because, as I looked, I saw Thompson, my second subaltern, leap out of our cellar and get hold of the man, and shortly afterwards, in the midst of bursting shells, carry him off. He had strapped the poor fellow's arm over a gaping wound (where his lung was exposed), and then proceeded to carry him to a little dressing station near at hand, where I went out and joined him.

On another occasion, when in action in Loos, he and Radcliffe,¹ hearing the piteous cries of some human creatures in agony, had discovered a German officer and man both crouched side by side in a small straw shelter near our guns. They were dreadfully wounded. The two boys dressed their wounds as well as it was possible and gave them some water from their

¹ Arthur Radcliffe died in the summer of 1917 as a result of wounds at Ypres. He received the Military Cross for conspicuous bravery, not long before his undaunted spirit passed out. Beloved, gallant youth.

water-bottle. Almost as they left the little shelter a German shell burst right on top of the two sufferers and blew them to pieces.

Colonel Lazare, commanding the French guns alongside my battery, was an exceedingly fine example of the French gunner. He had told me how suicidal it was for me to keep the position I held at the time. He said: "Your men are fine fellows, and have grit." He was an exact counterpart in appearance of Dr. Joseph Barnby (late organist at Eton), wearing large gold-rimmed glasses and a dark beard; a courteous, kindly fellow, very outspoken on occasion, and he did not hesitate to criticize in very strong language the want of prudence (as he called it) in what he saw of the British artillery. And certainly in many points he was right in his criticism.

It was during this period that one day I by chance came across General A. E. Wardrop, who was then commanding the artillery of the Guards Division. I found him alone, tramping round the Loos salient, reconnoitring for battery positions.

Wardrop spelt the opening chapter of my soldiering—he stood out as the most prominent figure at the time I first donned the "Jacket," when as a captain he commanded "X" Battery Royal Horse Artillery.

As a disciplinarian he frightened me horribly in my youth and inexperience: indeed, he nearly frightened me out of the Service.

But I never realized until years afterwards how greatly I was indebted to this singular officer for instilling into me the necessity of waking up and learning my profession—or leaving it.

I did wake up, and no senior officer ever frightened me afterwards.

All that need be said here is that those who ever served under this efficient gunner, whether officers or men, were lucky.

On two or three occasions in the war when the Staff, glittering over our heads, had been unusually interfering and annoying, and when indeed one began to feel that fighting the German was child's play to this continual badgering one was subjected

to by those red-hatted gentlemen who could so often have helped, and not hindered, it seemed providential that Wardrop should have been the one to give the cheering note and the incentive to "carry on"; and at Loos, when the tide was very low and our feelings against the Staff were very high, all he said was, when I met him wandering about the salient and we had discussed the situation: "By God, your men must be proud of themselves—I bet their tails are up."

Major-General A. E. Wardrop, C.B., C.M.G., served as Lord Cavan's artillery General at Ypres and later in Italy.

HIGHLANDERS AT LOOS

*(Copy of Letter written by Second-in-Command
Cameron Highlanders)*

"MY DEAR COOKE,

I have read your account of the fighting at and near Loos with the utmost interest; a very fine account it is.

It's impossible for any one man to note every detail. What happened on the morning of September 26th was that the 45th Brigade (the only one, I believe) were ordered to attack the redoubt on Hill 70 at 9 a.m., after one hour's preparation by the artillery.

This they did, but found it impossible to get and hold ground further advanced than the most forward trench on Hill 70.

Our losses would have been much more severe had it not been for the excellent practice of your battery, and I am fully convinced that a strong German counter-attack was only prevented from developing because of your accurate fire over the brow of the hill. We all feel that we owe your battery a deep debt of gratitude for your work on that day.

The general retirement was, as we thought, an ordered retirement, and when it was made clear to us that it was not intended to give up the ground so hardily won, my battalion,

or as many of them as could be collected, went back and re-occupied the trench on Hill 70, and held it until relieved at 2 a.m. on September 27th by 6th Cavalry Brigade under General David Campbell.

Good luck to you, and many thanks for letting me see your most admirable account.

You have been tried exceedingly high.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) A. CAMPBELL."

These things are strong, when other strong things fail :
The urge that quickens grass ; the deep still tides
Of ocean ; and, beneath a sweeping gale,
The slender reed that bows and yet abides ;
The granite peaks of silence ; and the tie
That binds the heart of woman, ages long,
To petal softness and a first frail cry
Making her mother. These are the things most strong.

The strength of ships goes down before a storm,
The strength of athletes meets the dust at last ;
But when familiar strong things crumble, warm
Your confidence with sight of these, hold fast
To these and sing ; for these things, and a song
That rises from discouragement, are strong.

HELEN FRAZER-BOWER.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SOMME

WITH THE 34TH TYNESIDE DIVISION—COLONEL WARBURTON—THE UNLUCKY
TRANSFERENCE—CHAOS—UNHAPPY MESSAGES—INVALIDED HOME—"NO
MONEY IN IT"

"Remember, if I fall, a soldier's death is glorious and if I could choose that is the way I would go."

I WAS sitting on deck in the P. & O. ss. *Namur*, two days out of Bombay and bound for England, *en route* for France once more. For six days before leaving India I had been stewing in that suffocating city. It was good to be at sea again and in God's fresh air.

I had not until then had the heart to write any notes on the Somme battles, but time had soothed, to a certain extent, the sorrow which I sustained during my last fighting in France. The loss of many good friends.

For five months I had been in India, as the next chapter will show, helping to convey some of the experiences and lessons of this war to my brother officers, and having completed my task I was now returning to the Western Front. During the voyage home I wrote down what I remembered of my experiences on the Somme.

The last time I prattled about this cursed war it was to convey some idea of the battle of Loos as portrayed by a battery commander. One well-known officer doing duty at the War Office read this little account, and his remarks on the performance of my battery are worth pondering over. We were lunching at Boodle's at the time. "You see," he said, "that fly on the wall: your battery in this huge war is of just so much

importance and of no more than this fly." I understood his point.

Brave things were done by officers and men in that affair, and never a mention for any of those plucky young fellows. That was all many months ago, and big battles had been fought and many lives had passed since that September, although there have been no bloodier fights than Loos, where 80,000 casualties on our side in a few hours must amply tell the tale.

In January, 1916, I took out a battery of the New Army, with the 34th Division—a Division which was destined later on to take a brilliant part in the Somme battles. At this time every day to me was one of interest and joy. Full of interest, which the training of batteries must always be when you see the result of your work developing week by week, and your battery eventually fit to take part in the mighty struggle, aye, and to distinguish itself at last.

This all happened on July 6th in our position in front of Albert. We had spent half the winter and the spring just south of Armentières and at Fleurbaix, and finally the 34th Division entrained south to Albert in preparation for the operations on the Somme. The infantry of the 34th Division, like the personnel of its artillery, consisted of Tyneside Scottish and Tyneside Irish—North countrymen, hard men and hard fighters ; so that the Division did gallant work pushing up on the first day of the attack (July 1st) into Contalmaison, and advancing some hundreds of yards up the slope towards Pozières. The 34th Division formed the right division of the centre corps (3rd Corps) of the five corps of which the Fourth Army consisted. The whole of this army was engaged from north to south, that is to say, 8th, 10th, 3rd, 16th and 13th Corps. The attack was launched at 7.30 on the misty morning of July 1st, after a very heavy final bombardment. We had pounded the enemy for a week before this. The attack extended along a front of twenty-six miles from Gommecourt in the north, on the extreme right of the Third Army, to Foucaucourt in the

south, on the right of the Sixth French Army. By July 3rd we had made, in our corps, 4163 prisoners, including 69 officers. Boiselles was in our hands, and we had advanced considerably up the hill. By July 10th the 3rd Corps Artillery had fired at the enemy 702,400 shells of all calibres. They say that on the Somme, up to about the second week in August, the British had let loose 100,000 tons of metal. I can believe it from the sound—the everlasting roar which dinned in our ears for many days from our position in the front row of that mighty sea of guns of every size.

We reduced the zone for which we were responsible—two thousand yards—to absolute pulp, so that the hostile guns with their observation stations knocked out, and telephone wire ripped up, were unable to return our fire.

On the eve of our advance a flight of aeroplanes, armed with rockets fired from pistols, attacked the five Hun observation balloons which had been watching us for days, and these descended in flames—a glorious sight. This, to the disgust of Fritz, happened all along the front to be attacked, and several balloons suffered a like fate.

The British Division on our left had a terrible time of it and was unable to advance at all: the dead heaped up on No-Man's-Land was a sight not to be forgotten.

A few days after our advance I visited the newly captured German trenches, so filled with dead that it was difficult to avoid walking on the corpses—everything shapeless. The faces of the dead seemed to have become a part of the sand-bagged parapets and trench bottoms. The stench was overpowering.

Later on, one or two more rather perilous excursions had to be made with the object of selecting observation posts and advanced positions for guns. In these succeeding days Colonel Warburton, who commanded our 160th Brigade R.F.A., showed great skill in the handling of his guns, and thus preventing repeated local hostile attacks from taking effect. He did great work, and for this and his gallant example all through was awarded the D.S.O.

My four guns in just over two weeks fired off 14,000 rounds day and night. Many noteworthy incidents occurred, and my officers and men showed their worth, and I had every reason to be intensely proud of the battery.

Young Charlton, the second subaltern, with two telephonists, acted as Liaison Officer up in Contalmaison, arriving before the Seaforths' Battalion Headquarters had got there. At that time the little village was in desperate plight. This party established telephonic communication with guns under very trying circumstances in the Château Contalmaison cellar. The dead lay everywhere, and during the time that Charlton and his two men were settling down, one side of the cellar wall was shelled in, and the wires were cut the first night twelve times. It was almost certain death to go out and mend the wire. Nevertheless these tough fellows went out time after time, so that communication never failed at this critical period, and, in consequence, we were able to form barrages of fire with the group of guns to stop repeated German attacks in front of Pozières and to the east of Contalmaison.

One of these men was given a card of recommendation for his fine work. God bless such brave fellows !

These two telephonists were father and son, both miners.

Boiselles, Contalmaison and Pozières all fell in time, after desperate fighting, and all these days our batteries were pounding away and doing good work. We were thanked by the infantry we supported—the infantry trusted us and were grateful.

As for the barbed wire in front of us, it had been cleared away by our shells. I have never seen wire so cleaned up. On the first day a sergeant in the Tyneside Scottish, with blood trickling from head and arm, came strolling back through the guns, and we shouted to him : “ Was the wire cut well enough for you ? ” “ Wire,” says he. “ Ave coom frae the fourth line, you b—— gunners, and I could na find a blessed piece of wire to clean ma pipe with. Yes, there's nae wire left.”

The following gracious message went round the Army, and made us feel proud :

“ Headquarters, R.A.,
3rd Corps.

160th Brigade—
8th Divnl. Arty.
19th Divnl. Arty.
23rd Divnl. Arty.
34th Divnl. Arty.
Heavy Artillery.

The Commander-in-Chief visited Corps Headquarters this evening, and when leaving directed me to convey not only his own warm personal thanks but that of the whole Army to all ranks of the Royal Artillery of the corps that have taken part in the battle now in progress for the gallantry, skill and devotion and endurance with which they have carried out their duties in every particular.

He stated that he had issued an Order of the Day to the Army at large, in which the services of the Royal Artillery in general had been specially mentioned, but wished his appreciation and thanks to be conveyed more specifically to all ranks of the R.A. 3rd Corps, of which every individual officer, N.C.O. and man had worthily upheld the great traditions of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, beyond which no higher praise can be given.

(Signed) H. UNICKE,
Brig.-General,
Commanding Royal
Artillery, 3rd Corps.”

July 9th, 1916.

In 1915 as a result of the fighting at Loos of that splendid battery which I had the honour to command, I was recommended for promotion.

Owing to my brigade commander's refusal to recommend two of my officers for bravery, and my consequent behaviour and violent language towards this senior officer for disregarding my request, I was not promoted. A friend of mine received a letter from a corps Staff Officer : “ He has been recommended for a brigade, but has quarrelled with his brigade commander, so will not be promoted. . . . He is a fine fighter. . . .”

But whether, in the last remark, this Staff Officer meant I was a fine fighter with the Staff or with the Bosche, I never knew.

It seemed that now at last, in 1916, I would get my promotion. During the battle of the Somme the C.R.A. Divisional Artillery under whom I had fought for some months applied to G.H.Q. that I might be promoted to command one of his brigades. In the meantime I supervised the 87th Brigade and wrote the orders for its advance as well as shooting my battery.

General Arthur Kirby's request was refused and I was ordered, a month later, to join as Lieutenant-Colonel an unknown brigade in an unknown division in a different sector of the line.

My present C.R.A. knew me, was patient with my faults, could depend on me, could contemplate with no small amusement my various "brushes" with Staff Officers with whom on occasions I fell exceedingly foul. The advantages of good understanding between officers in the heat of battle were not always sufficiently considered. The fact that I had, myself, been shooting my guns for weeks over my present area, that I was *au fait* with the immediate situation, had chosen positions for a further advance, etc., etc., all these obvious reasons for remaining where I was were ignored by the higher command, very naturally so perhaps in such a war and such a muddle.

What a blow! So, after all, I was to leave our fine Division with its gallant gunner general, and go off to a division the rumours concerning which were far from reassuring.

Both my general and colonel seemed to think I had nothing much to look forward to, and I was thoroughly depressed at leaving them.

That day of my departure I lunched with Kirby, who was always consideration and kindness itself, and later the Brigade Major, Arthur Main, beloved by all, handed me over to the C.R.A. of my new division.

This officer drove me round past Fricourt through the village of Mametz, and we halted just beyond the village, now a heap of bricks, which a few weeks earlier had been in German hands. My new C.R.A. then pointed out the direction in which I should

find my new batteries and directed me to continue my way on foot towards Marlboro' Wood where I was to find the guns in action. I was wrongly directed but found an orderly to conduct me to my destination.

We crossed the "Valley of Death" and at moments ran and crouched down, to avoid the shells. The Germans had brought up opposite this corner of the British front several new divisions and many heavy guns. We were having a bad time of it.

I found my new command in terrible plight. Eleven officers and men of my headquarters had been killed and wounded, including the doctor and sergeant-major both killed; the colonel whom I replaced, badly wounded. Close by, three of my batteries were in action, or rather the guns were in position; the personnel were taking cover in a long trench behind the bank in which my adjutant and orderly officer were at the moment trying to dig a hole for refuge.

I was received with open arms; the officers seemed relieved and grateful that I had come to take charge.

We could scarcely scrape together enough gear to make tea there at the bottom of the trench, as the Mess property had been blown up. Officers and men were quite unhinged, and no wonder; the men had seen their pals killed day after day, and for two weeks had had scarcely any rest. Every time in this exposed position they moved out of the trench to get to their guns, a barrage of fire came ripping down; and twice before I arrived on the scene they had attempted and failed.

My fourth battery lay behind Mametz Wood, a howitzer battery. I had been told by the C.R.A. that one of the batteries had had "rather a bad time," and that it might be necessary to move it to another position and that I was to *use my discretion* as regards this. But it seems that the Headquarters knew very little about it, and the position had not been reconnoitred by anyone on the Headquarters staff.

I attempted to cheer up the three battery commanders, who I at once saw were excellent fellows (and they proved to be as brave as they were gallant soldiers).

I strolled over and spoke to the men, who were crouching down in a trench. My adjutant, who I am glad to say was later on rewarded for his splendid work, gave me all the information he could, saying that the men were totally unnerved and would I see Colonel D— who had his headquarters close by? This officer at once in very strong terms urged me to move my position at all hazards as the men had been going through hell, and, he said, that it was only fair to get them out of it.

I suggested making a reconnaissance there and then and moving out next morning, but Colonel D— again urged the necessity of clearing out forthwith: "You must get the men out to-night."

It was made clear to me that there was no available position anywhere on the same ridge on which we stood, and that every possible corner on that forward hill was taken up by already overcrowded guns. All this time 8-inch shells and 5.9 shells were shrieking overhead, mostly landing some considerable distance beyond us. As I looked down on the valley across which I had crawled I saw a belt of 8-inch shells extending from one side of this valley to the other.

Obviously in this sector panic reigned; and most important of all one realized as one surveyed this sea of guns thrown pell-mell one battery on top of another, that sheer knowledge of all strategy and tactics of artillery was wanting, the one cry being: "Shove every gun available, anywhere."

That these guns offered inevitable and endless targets to Hindenburg's artillery, that these guns ranged tier upon tier (in some cases thirty or forty yards one behind the other) were responsible for increasing casualties to each other, would appear to be of small account.

Panic amongst the gods. . . . Death for the gunners who served them. Taking with me the battery commanders, we descended the hill, crossed the valley and ascended on the other side through Caterpillar Wood, a copse of bare stumps of trees, a few taller trees standing out gaunt and stricken by shells, up one side of the "Valley of Death." In the valley a motor

lorry had been cut in half by a German shell, the two halves of the huge lorry now one hundred yards apart ; a man sat in the front half, the driver with his hands clutching his head, arms resting on knees. It was difficult to realize that in this lifelike position the man was stone dead.

After two and a half hours' thorough reconnaissance a very excellent position for the three batteries was selected. I gave orders that my adjutant and orderly officer were to meet me at this position, then I wandered on and selected a position for the Brigade Headquarters in a trench about three hundred yards behind the line of guns.

During my exploration I met another brigade commander whose headquarters were close to my new position, and he gave me food of which I was glad. I then returned to the spot where my adjutant and orderly officer were to meet me. The batteries had orders to come up under cover of dark at intervals of half an hour. Soon it became dark and all of a sudden the Germans began dropping gas shells up the valley and all round the hill beyond, so that I and my orderly took cover in a trench. We were obliged to wear gas helmets until three o'clock next morning. Soon after this hour the jingle of harness announced the arrival of the first battery. The drivers of these batteries did splendid work that night hauling the guns out of that difficult ground, and driving up the valley in their gas helmets . . . no easy job.

By eight o'clock all the batteries were in position and the men, utterly worn out, lay down round their guns and slept.

A difficult move well carried out.

I remember hating to disturb the men from their slumbers and having to rouse them to dig a trench for cover.

At 10 a.m. the C.R.A. arrived, his headquarters were at least three miles away in Albert. To my dismay he expressed extreme annoyance at my having shifted the batteries, and at once told me that they must be sent up forthwith to the hill we had just left. It was useless to expostulate or to explain to this officer all the circumstances in which I had found the batteries ; how,

owing to the shelling, the men were prevented from even approaching their guns, etc., etc. The G.O.C. Division wished the guns not further back than two hundred yards, and if possible the guns should be placed *in the infantry trenches*.

I said that I scarcely thought this wise. I did not think the infantry would bless us for this last astonishing idea. It was useless to protest, it was of no avail to suggest that the men were done to a turn, that they were unfit for another move, at all events for some hours.

His argument was that our present range was too long, and to remedy this we should move to Mametz Wood where already forty batteries were in action, and by this intolerable move we should gain an advantage of 250 yards in range.

Seeing that all further discussion was thrown away on the C.R.A. I told him that I would then and there return to the first position myself with one battery commander and thoroughly reconnoitre positions for the batteries.

It had, to tell the truth, been a great blow to me that fault was found with the move we had with great difficulty accomplished ; and I had inwardly congratulated myself on having extricated these wretched guns from a position that was wholly unsuitable and which had become untenable thanks to the bad selection of ground which was exposed both to view, to frontal and enfilade fire.

Below Caterpillar Hill as we prepared to cross the "Valley of Death" an 8-inch shell tore down quite close to us, pieces of debris hitting me in the face ; we dived into an old Hun dug-out.

On arriving up the slope beyond, I consulted a field officer of another division who was marking out a fresh position for his battery. We came to a clear understanding that I should select positions one side of the trench whilst he was content to remain on the other, so that we should not clash. It was important to remember this because of what happened later.

With the greatest difficulty we finally plotted out positions for each gun, sandwiched in amongst other batteries, and less

than 200 yards immediately in front of other guns ; such was the cramped position on this already overcrowded hill.

Detachments were sent out to dig trenches behind the positions to be taken up by batteries for refuge in case of severe shelling ; and also to erect paradoss. This was done and the batteries were ordered to move up in succession commencing at 9.15 p.m.

At 9.30 p.m. I received the following written messages from my battery commanders :

“ The — Division R.A. are objecting to our coming here owing to the congestion of batteries here, and that it is their area. Some of them also have been shelled out of their positions to north-east of Marlboro' Wood. It is quite impossible to go to the neighbourhood of our last position. If the objection succeeds, could you not try again to allow us to remain where we came this morning ? ”

A second message arrived as follows :

“ We are here on the position you have indicated. Major M— of — Battery — Division has appeared and absolutely prohibits our making any preparations for any other batteries to come in here at all.

There are four batteries to come in (one of which is his) about forty yards behind and others just in front and on flank. He claims that it is — Division area and that he was here first, etc., etc., and is most nice about it, but won't let us do anything. His colonel is ringing up — Divisional R.A. and asking them to communicate with — Divisional R.A. at once. He declares that for us to come in means sheer butchery for their batteries as well as for us. Anyhow, he prohibits my doing anything pending further orders. He asks that you will kindly forward enclosed memo at once to our Brigade Headquarters. We wait in the shelter trench for further orders from you. Please let us have them at your convenience.

Major M— has just this moment told me that he has received orders from — Divisional R.A. to move his guns

into such a position as will make it physically impossible for us to come here."

The third note arrived from Major M— of — Division :

"To O.C. — F.A. BRIGADE.

I have just seen Lieutenant — who tells me he has orders to bring a battery into position about 30 yards in front of my left-hand guns. This whole area is already full of batteries, and in my opinion it is absolutely impossible to bring in this battery to the proposed position.

A. S. M—, Major

Comdg. — Battery R.F.A. — Div."

When I received the above messages the batteries were already about to move, and the teams up. Apparently M—— according to orders given him had hurried guns, after I had left, into the very position I had chosen, and the position then had been selected in M——'s presence and with his entire agreement.

To be given this information at such a late hour when every preparation had been made for the move forward was disturbing to say the least of it. At once I cancelled all my previous orders as it was now a physical impossibility to occupy the prepared positions.

The climax was reached when I received a message to the effect that I was not to interfere with the area of the — Division, but to select another position forthwith and occupy this that night. In this message I recognized that I was dealing with officers of a kind unsuited to my taste, of which the less said the better. I wrote strongly, angrily and to the point.

To move batteries at that hour in the dark to positions not even selected, positions which up to the present could not even be found by daylight thanks to the congestion of guns, was extremely unwise and surely would prove so. Also the British were bombarding at the time, which added to the perplexity of this hopeless situation. Besides this it was impossible to find a

reason for any move at all, as the present position fulfilled its requirements, and the men were in one sense in a very much more advantageous position.

We officers out there on the spot must be able to judge better than officers miles away in billets as to how guns can support infantry, and it was quite clear to me that we could work efficiently from the present position although the range to our furthest objective was about 4400 yards (on the long side); in addition the men were totally exhausted.

As regards the message sent to me by the G.O.C., my answer was not so pleasant: "If the G.O.C. wishes the guns placed in our infantry trenches, tell him to come and do it himself."

In my despair at finding myself placed under officers who appeared to have no confidence in my judgment, I wrote to the Brigade Major:

"For God's sake send me back to my own division and get some damned thrusting fellow who is prepared to sacrifice his men uselessly, which I am not."

Already I felt worn and weary at the thought of being cast under such a rule. I longed for my old general who would be the first to condemn the orders which I had received.

The effect of my message was that the guns did not move that night and that the detachments rested. The Brigade was to come out to rest on the following day. The letter I wrote, it appears, was taken to my old Divisional Headquarters. Next morning I got orders to come in to headquarters of this new division. I suppose I looked ill. The C.R.A. said that in my decision I had acted as I considered best. But obviously my messages did not suit his book.

During this interview with the C.R.A. the telephone rang, a message from General Kirby (which a Staff Officer afterwards repeated to me) was to the effect that he wished me sent back to his headquarters, and that he objected to my being bullied and found fault with. I stayed three days with my C.R.A. of 34th Division, and from there was given three weeks' sick leave,

the last days I was destined to spend with my beloved father who died a few weeks later on, after I had sailed for India.

Such was my experience on the Somme. One must have the courage of one's opinion in difficult moments. Officers and men serving under you and sharing dangers with you look to you for guidance. They trust you in difficult situations to pull them through, and when the moment comes when all may have to be sacrificed, they again know that you have done what was necessary.

Those above you, ready to judge you, do not count at such times ; they are not on the scene ; you alone bear the responsibility of your actions and act for what you believe to be for the best.

Smith-Dorrien, our greatest general, never sacrificed men uselessly. It was for that reason that when on the Marne he spoke those words : "Gentlemen, we will fight," all ranks knew that whatever the sacrifice or the issue, it was necessary ; and by his stand in face of enormous odds he undoubtedly saved our little army.

Again in the Ypres Salient, had he been listened to, thousands of lives would assuredly have been spared.

This was a son of England ; in his heart
Dwelt charity and justice and a scorn
Of those who play the easier baser part
And sully the fair name where they were born. . . .

Tempered to shining steel, his mind, a spear,
Thrust against prejudice of race and caste.
Against dark hosts of ignorance and fear
He rode for truth and honour to the last.

WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR.

Those who read my story will without doubt say : "Here is one who has the instinctive contempt common to all who watch the results of Staff work without seeing or realizing the attendant difficulties."

But that would not be quite true as I myself have served as

Adjutant, A.D.C. and Staff Officer, so perhaps have some experience of the administrative branch.

In the following August I received orders from the War Office to proceed to India for a visit to that country of five months' or so duration in order to found a school of gunnery, the first school of its kind in India. I retained the temporary rank of Lieutenant-Colonel for this duty.

Whilst on leave from France I went one day in London to see an odd-job man about having some furniture shifted. He was a cheery old scoundrel. He had a nose the colour of an unripe strawberry, two or three chins and blue, bulbous eyes. Seeing me dressed in uniform he looked up from his work of readjusting second-hand, antique-faked furniture, to say : " My son's a captain the Gordon 'ighlanders . . . but there's no money in it."

No doubt he wished his son and heir was helping Poppa to shift those depressing bedsteads he was massaging at the moment . . . there was more money in it than fooling around in a kilt . . . killing Huns.

CHAPTER XVIII

A VISIT TO INDIA

SCHOOL OF GUNNERY—SIR CHARLES MONRO—SIMLA—SIR ARTHUR BARRETT
—PRACTICE CAMP—BIG MANŒUVRES—THE INTERVIEW AT WHITEHALL

INDIA, what a country to buck about ! Twice during my service I had left it in disgust after a few months' sojourn. I am an authority on nothing connected with this glorified country. To me it is one huge conglomeration of muddles, with here and there streaks of extraordinary efficiency. I felt convinced that with Sir Charles Monro, who had lately arrived as Commander-in-Chief, and his Chief of the Staff there would be drastic changes in military questions and that a healthy sprinkling of exceptionally good officers lately sent to Army Headquarters from home would have the long-desired effect, please God, of working off old scores of red tape and tomfoolery too long endured. Want of organization has been the mischief in almost every department ; and officials of any branch, whether military or civil, had been content to crawl on like half-dead flies in chaotic surroundings year in year out, drawing in many cases, I suppose, a sufficiency of money to counterbalance their existence and loss of health.

The poor white women one feels for, with their drawn and haggard faces—old before they are young. Everywhere sickness and full hospitals.

On arrival at Bombay I received orders to proceed to Akora, which lies right up in the north-west frontier province, not far from the frontier, about 1600 miles from Bombay. In the ship outward bound I had made the acquaintance of General F. E.

Johnson, one of the most charming and capable soldiers it has been my good fortune to meet. This officer was on his way to India to take up the duties of Inspector-General of R.H. and R.F.A. As my work there was almost entirely under his surveillance I had every opportunity of recognizing the immense value of this exceptional gunner. It was at once a pleasure and a privilege to be able to assist him in my capacity as Commandant of School of Gunnery. Let me add that from the day I landed to the day of my departure I met with nothing but kindness at all hands, and many new friends I made.

Thanks to the able staff at my disposal (many of whom I had great difficulty with the authorities to keep), the school was successful, and we all felt that we had been able to assist the many officers sent from all parts of India on the Gunnery Courses ; and they were, I know, grateful because of of the many appreciative letters I received afterwards. Besides running the School of Gunnery I also acted as Commandant to two artillery camps near Delhi, and assisted in arranging the artillery manœuvres which were held in the north of India. And, amongst other duties, I went down to the Staff School in Central India, where I lectured to budding staff officers—travelling by train during the period of five months a distance of 10,000 miles. The School of Gunnery opened on my arrival at Akora on October 13th, 1916.

On December 15th the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles Monro, arrived with the military Secretary, General Scott, and other staff officers to see the school.

The camp which formed the school was divided up by broad roads. The school staff and mess were situated in the centre of the camp, with tents of officers attending the courses grouped about. To the south a battery of artillery had its encampment, to the east a troop of Native cavalry, and on the west side two companies of Sikh pioneers flanked the main camp. The camp in all held about a thousand persons, with their horses and guns. It lay in the valley of the Kabul river, on its right bank between the two spurs of the Himalayas, the home of many unchanged

villains. One could see the snow mountain peaks away in the distance across the river.

The Commander-in-Chief arrived by train at the little wayside station of Akora at eight o'clock in the morning and remained with us until three o'clock that afternoon. A guard of honour was drawn up in the station, and the whole platform was covered with a crimson carpet. Every sort of ruffian from the hills, the most villainous-looking rabble, squatted round the station to get a glimpse of the great Chief. Later on in the day he stood looking at these rascals and asked me who they were. I told him they were probably some of the greatest murderers in Northern India. Akora was well known for its thieves and cut-throats, and not so long ago a party of this ilk had stopped the mail train, killed the engine driver and robbed the van; and a party also had slunk into Akora village a few days ago and had shot two defenceless creatures of their own colour.

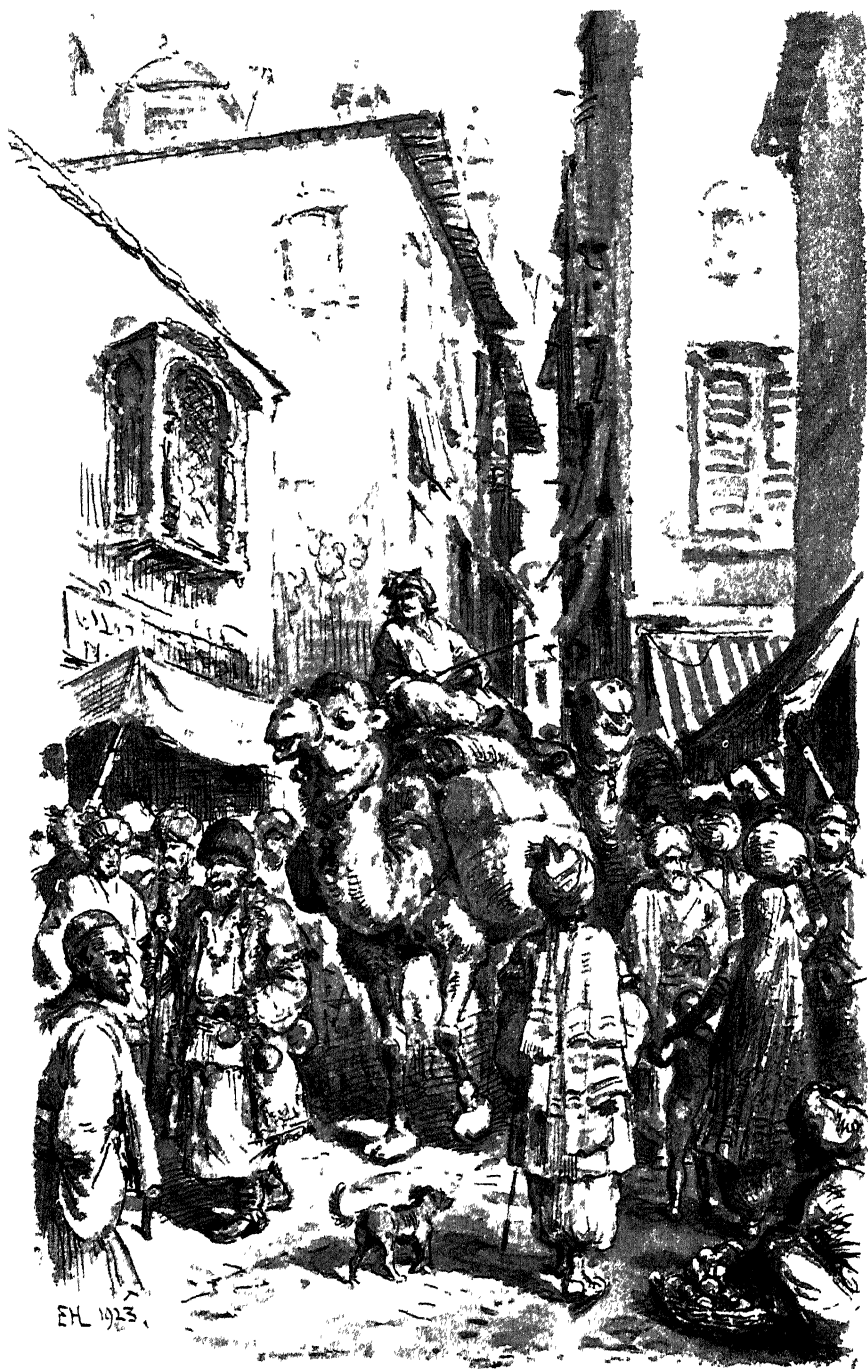
In the morning, when the Chief's train arrived, I strolled up to his saloon to consult him as to the day's programme, and remained for breakfast. Later on the Chief with his entourage all mounted their horses and, followed by a guard of Indian cavalry, swung away for a short distance across the hills to witness artillery firing, a mounted orderly riding immediately behind the Chief with the Union Jack slung to his lance. Then another large cavalcade of horsemen came trotting up, consisting of general officers from neighbouring camps and the officers of the Senior Course. The Chief took up a position which commanded a good view of the ground to be occupied by two batteries which were to prepare for an attack on a village about two miles distant. In the meantime a howitzer battery came into action; and over the hill in the distance a field battery could be seen manœuvring up into its position. The Chief then called to me in an aggrieved tone: "Look at those horses which seem to be in everybody's way—the battery staff of course. Whenever I attend artillery manœuvres the battery staff comes bustling along. The leading bombardier hurls the Inspecting Officer into the ditch at the commencement of the show, where

Never heard of it!!!

I came from India!!!

E.H. 1913

THE INTERVIEW AT WHITEHALL



PESHAWAR, A CITY ONE CAN ASSOCIATE WITH THE TALLS OF THE

he lies for the rest of the day and sees nothing more until it is time to go home. Look at them ! ” I went up to Monro and said : “ Yes, sir, this may be true, but you are at this moment pointing out to me your own horses and horse-holders, who must be collected together—they are not the battery staff, which has not even come into view, and,” I added : “ I wish you to watch carefully the battery staff which has been trained differently,” at which he chuckled good-humouredly.

All the rest of the day he was delightful. I rode and talked with him all the morning, and at the end he clapped me on the shoulder, saying : “ Well done, this is a good show, thank you very much.” He insisted on seeing what had been the effect of the howitzer shells on a village. The damage on the village tower and walls proved, on examination, to be considerable. During the operations aeroplanes had co-operated, and fire was brought to bear on a certain point representing infantry massing, etc. The whole day’s work was skilfully carried out and reflected great credit on the officers taking part. Later I introduced the Commander-in-Chief to the whole class of officers, and he had a kind word with many of them, then he turned to me and said : “ I know this school of yours is a success because they all look so happy.” We all rode into camp, where we had a hearty lunch of roast duck and other delicacies, the native cooks having exerted themselves to do the best they could for this large and distinguished gathering. Sir Charles Monro was, as we all knew in France, a gallant soldier and well loved by those who served under him. A man to lean on and trust : bluff and straight as a die. Perhaps in his general appearance and manner not unlike *Père Joffre*. He had met my Rifle Brigade brother, then a promising young general on the Western Front (still the apple of Windbags’ eye).

On January 5th, Sir Arthur Barrett, Northern Army Commander, came up north with General Loch, R.E., to see us. Eight other generals and many infantry battalion commanders attended the day’s operations. A battalion of Ghurkas advanced to the attack under the artillery fire, and later many questions

were thrashed out as regards liaison and co-operation generally of artillery and infantry. Again aeroplanes searched for targets and assisted in observations of fire very successfully.

At Christmas time I went south to Delhi, in which place, during the cold months, the Army Headquarters and the Viceroy and Staff nowadays assemble. I stayed with one of the railway officials, and I did not hesitate to condemn his railways, and point out the shortcomings of this department. The railways in India were considered good, but to an outsider they failed in many respects. The stations were packed with screeching natives from morning till night. The natives revelled in travelling backwards and forwards in congested railway carriages squatting on their hunkers, packed as tightly as sardines, with their wives huddled up aloft on what resembled a large hat-rack. At the stations they were herded up in gangs for hours and sometimes days—missing train after train, filling the place with their shrill brain-racking cries.

On January 2nd I returned to the School of Gunnery to carry on with the last junior officers' course, and on January 13th, 1917, the school broke up. I travelled again to Delhi, as I now had attached myself to Army Headquarters. My departure from Akora is perhaps worth recording. A guard of honour of 100 Sikhs, great big swarthy-looking warriors with their black beards curled over their ears, formed up on the railway platform. Many of those fine fellows had fought at Neuve Chapelle in France. I personally inspected them, walking down the ranks and saying a word here and there. Many of the old hands possessed medals of the Frontier fights. Few of the men were under six feet in height. They had done exceptionally good work at my camp, loyal hard-working chaps. Then the train came in and I got into my reserved carriage. As the train slowly moved away there was a loud roar from these deep-throated fellows, who were chanting a kind of war-cry, and the officers in front, with hands held in supplication, were praying for my safe conduct in the future. This was to me necessarily a very moving sight; and I stood at the door and saluted until

the noise died away and they were out of sight. The officers and men of this regiment, the 36th Pioneers, knew I had appreciated their good work and excellent behaviour all through the period of the school, and it was gratifying to know that they realized this.

I remember when I received the crushing blow at the loss of my father, the two native officers of this regiment shadowed me about the camp until I turned round to an English officer and asked if he thought they had anything they wished to see me about. And the two tall men came up to say that they wanted to show how deeply they felt for me in my grief. When I looked up into their fine dark eyes full of truth and goodness I was greatly touched.

Both at Peshawar and at Delhi I spent many hours grubbing about in shops and bargaining over various purchases, which filled me with fascination. I managed to pick up one or two old carpets from Pundjeh and Bokhara, emeralds, Kashmir shawls and other little possible gifts for my mother and sister. Sometimes, on off days, I would spend hours haggling over some object of special delight and examining many things, pictures and old rare embroideries which were only brought to light from the back of the little shops after much persuasion and plenty of chaff. Once, after a long passage of arms with an old fellow, and after I had purchased a fine cloth (or *Sari*) of crimson and gold, we became such pals that he offered me his own private carriage to take me home. One felt like royalty stepping into this glorified two-horsed conveyance. Two men sat on the box-seat, and another creature hung on like a monkey almost under the carriage. Cur-dogs barked, and small urchins, as must always happen at such obvious display of wealth, ran behind hoping for bakhshish. But the old man, who incidentally was known to be immensely rich, was not always so happy after his bargaining with me, and once, when he saw hesitation on my part, he recklessly offered to toss me for some expensive article, and I won the toss; his long yellow teeth protruded with wrath and disappointment.

These scenes all occurred in the Changni Chowk, Delhi, which has been recorded as the richest street in the whole world. A dirtier and more evil-smelling street it is difficult to imagine. The little tumble-down houses on either side, with brown fly-blown monkeys perched on broken-down wooden balconies and roofs (picking fleas off their neighbours), and the dismal aspect of the place generally, certainly belied the fact of the vast riches to be found in this slum in which diamonds and gems of rarest quality were hoarded in underground cellars.

The city of Peshawar is such a wonderful secret city that one can associate it with tales of the Arabian Nights. At that time one was only allowed to walk its old-world narrow streets by daylight, and then only in parties of two or three together. Evil is depicted on the faces of the long-haired ruffians in Peshawar. Occasionally some tribe would swoop down at night from the hills and do wholesale murder. The city is exposed to every villainy, situated as it is right on the frontier. At this time unfriendly tribes over the border to the north of Peshawar had elected to make war on us. The British had entrenched themselves along a portion of this frontier near Shabkadr, and along the position wire entanglements had been erected. This wire was electrified. One of the Mullahs, a knowing fellow, convinced that he would be able to pass through the wire, if he carried with him the Holy Book, the Koran, fell into the trap. Next morning this unfortunate priest was found hung up in the wire electrocuted, an unpleasant sight, with his Bible in his hand. Aircraft did useful work in this fighting, observing fire for the batteries. At other times aeroplanes flying 100 feet above ground chivied the tribesmen, shooting them down with Lewis guns attached to the planes. This required great skill and judgment. It was no joke to be captured by these unscrupulous tribesmen, who resorted to every sort of fiendish torture if you fell into their hands. Several of our men had their eyes gouged out, and were treated to other nameless tortures.

On February 8th I went down to Indore, Central India, where

I had been asked to lecture at the Staff School and to assist in a Staff Ride. I was put up at the Residency by Mr. Bosanquet, the Resident, who was perfectly charming and kind to us all. It was all most enjoyable. Colonel Stapleton, an old acquaintance of mine, was one of the instructors, and he was evidently doing very useful work at the Staff School. At my opening address to those budding Staff Officers I said: "Remember that the Staff Officer is the well-paid servant of the Regimental Officer." They were a delightful lot of fellows, and a very intelligent batch of officers.

The Resident lived in a regular palace of a place with a glorious garden of beautiful stone terraces and green lanes. English roses and rare Japanese plants clustered in prettily arranged groups round about this stone-pillared mansion. It reminded one of England, and was therefore delightful. Jelf was first Secretary to the Resident. Jelf had been at Eton with me, and he married the headmaster's (Dr. Warre's) granddaughter. I stayed a night at their pretty bungalow. Bosanquet was a very highly esteemed and hard-working official, doing much good in the very large district over which he presided.

On February 12th I stayed two nights at Agra. I visited the tomb Taj Mahal, where Shah Jahan and his consort were laid. The tomb with its surroundings is quite the most lovely and thrilling conception of beauty that I ever came across. It is so beautiful that it beggars description. The building was designed by an Italian.

Major Wilson Johnston, General Staff Branch at A.H.Q., was Staff Officer and right hand to the Chief of the General Staff. He had been invalided from Mesopotamia. W. J., as we called him, insisted on my staying at his rooms, and he gave me the use of his motor car whenever I was at Delhi. He had the wonderful knack of making one feel that to be able to help you was entirely to him a pleasure and nothing else: such was his great and warm-hearted kindness. W. J., by the way, was a well-known champion racquet player—"a good all-round man."

I held two practice camps at Tughlakabad, one a Horse Artillery camp, the other for Field Artillery. These camps were full of interest and passed off very satisfactorily. At the second camp I became ill and for ten days was obliged to lie up and get out of bed for parades only. There were several cases of dysentery in the camp. Later I was to have gone to Quetta to select a site for the permanent School of Gunnery, but I was too unwell to take the long and rather tedious journey across the Scind desert. After staying at Delhi two nights I entrained for Simla, and arrived there on March 5th in a snowstorm. I endeavoured to get fit again up in these hills, but again fell ill whilst staying with Lady Kirkpatrick, the wife of the Chief of the General Staff. Thanks to the care of this kindest of women I became quite well in a week. Although I was far from well all the time I was staying with Lady Kirkpatrick, the recollection of this visit will always be associated with pleasant memories. Every day was spent in this peaceful atmosphere of gay laughter and gentle kindness. The good influence of such dear people travels far in such a country. Sir George Kirkpatrick, during my stay at this house, sailed for Mesopotamia to visit the troops who had been successful in the capture of Baghdad and rout of the Turks in that quarter.

Simla as a whole, all said and done, was then as dusty and insanitary a place as it is possible for a native to make it. The view over the hills is very lovely. Rickshaws, the rough hill coolies, the little tumble-down bungalows perched on the steep Kud sides (most of the roofs falling in), all help to make Simla peculiar in its way. It was far from healthy, and if your home lies below the one main road and some way down the hill-side, it was ten to one other people's drains would come rattling through your house and garden. Epidemics of all descriptions, including smallpox, were too frequent. Five thousand rupees was the yearly rent for a tumble-down chalet.

Such was the seat of Government of the tin-hats, greatly to their discredit. But all this, I felt, would be put right by the Chief and his Chief of Staff.

One day in a snowstorm I saw a priest trotting past absolutely naked except for the slimmest of loin bands (about three inches in width), with his hair reaching to his shoulders, a chilly attire, and Mrs. Grundy would have been annoyed. He looked so ridiculous and indecent that I shook with laughter. Another recollection of Simla was pacing up and down the lawn with my hostess when presently we found ourselves almost entirely surrounded by a ring of grinning brown monkeys, who eyed us with grave suspicion.

On March 18th I left Simla for Nowshera in preparation for the big skeleton artillery manœuvres which were to take place on March 28th and 29th. Here I stayed with Colonel Grove, R.F.A., D.S.O., driving over most days to Akora, eight miles distant, at which familiar spot the operations were to take place. These consisted of an exhibition of artillery methods of preparing for an attack, and the system of communication to be adopted throughout a division in preparation for and during an attack. Major Casson, D.S.O. (Staff Officer to the Northern Army Commander), Major Sopwith, R.E., M.C., and I were responsible for all the arrangements and organization of the show. It was part of my job to write the divisional artillery orders for the Division taking part, and Casson drafted out the divisional orders. Sopwith constructed the trenches, redoubts, and machine-gun emplacements, which on the enemy side were actually dug. I selected positions for the whole of the divisional artillery: also positions for the observation stations of all the batteries and positions of artillery brigade headquarters. Although the operations represented a moving battle it was necessary for safety reasons to construct bullet-proof dug-outs for the observation posts, infantry brigade headquarters, battalion headquarters and machine-gun emplacements. Units throughout the Division were linked up by telephone. The front for which the Division was responsible was 1200 yards broad. March 28th was spent in registration by batteries of all points in their zones which they considered necessary. The battle on the following day opened out with an intense

bombardment on the enemy front trenches and redoubts ; subsequently the infantry brigade commanders dealt with the various situations as the fight developed. Aeroplanes took an important part in the fight. A special train conveyed to Akora a large number of spectators, who represented probably every military centre in India, including Army Headquarters. There were twenty-three Generals present, including Sir Arthur Barrett, who presided as chief umpire. I was on the directing staff and remained with the C.R.A. during the show. It was so stage-managed that the divisional headquarters and spectators were on a hill looking down on the fight to a flank of the line of fire. These manœuvres were considered satisfactory and instructive. At the termination of the day's work a large conference was held, at which amongst others I was asked to say a few words on the operations in general. As the chief Ordnance Officer from Army Headquarters was present I took the opportunity of attacking this gentleman on the subject of the "cheap and nasty" equipment, such as telephones, etc., which were issued in India. This created an especial satisfaction amongst the long-suffering regimental officers who were present. The orders and arrangements had been very exhaustive, and at the end of the conference Sir Arthur Barrett was kind enough to express considerable thanks for our efforts. The Northern Army Commander, a tall, fine-looking soldier, besides being a sound officer, was full of extreme kindness, and the spark in his eye, with his tremendous sense of humour, was a thing not to be missed. That afternoon this assembly of officers scattered to the four winds, several travelled south by the special train, and I joined this party. The whole manœuvres had called for considerable organization, and, when it is considered that batteries of artillery had to be called up from many quarters—infantry officers, pioneers, engineers, troops of cavalry, airmen ; the digging of trenches, the construction of shelter proofs, erection of targets, ammunition, and a hundred and one details to be thought out, one can realize that in this terribly slow-moving country it required some effort to carry it through.

At Rawal Pindi I attended a conference of divisional artillery commanders, presided over by the Inspector-General of R.H. and R.F.A., and finally travelled south to Bombay, preparatory to embarking for England. Here I was obliged to wait six days for the mailboat in that perspiring city. There were 14,000 cases of plague and 2300 deaths during that week.

Whilst in India I endeavoured all I knew to improve the issue of equipment out there ; and with the backing up of General Johnson and General Isacke, Director of Military Training, articles of equipment which should have been issued for use not months but years ago, and which had been hoarded up in the arsenals to the everlasting disgrace of those officers responsible, were forced out of their hiding-places and given to batteries. On leaving the country I wrote to the Director of Military Training the following, embodied in my report on the manœuvres : “ However highly trained our batteries are in this country, unless they are equipped with efficient tools they can never be good. Until the Ordnance Department and arsenals interest themselves on behalf of the artillery in India efficient shooting will never be attained. Younger and up-to-date officers having a knowledge of requirements from personal experience must be put in charge of these important departments. Senile decay has set in, and is responsible for the unpardonable stagnancy in our ordnance, and for our artillery not reaching the high level which we must insist on reaching even at the expense of removing these officers who are answerable for the present state of affairs.”

What a good fellow Isacke was ! I think that when I told him that I considered him “ human ” he was immensely pleased. He was out to help everybody and always with delightful tact.

On my first appointment as Commandant of the School of Gunnery in India I had collected all my personal notes, the result of experience in the war in France, from the end of October, 1914, to August, 1916, during which period off and on I had been present in the Western Front in the firing line.

Artillery officers representing Headquarters R.A. of the Forces

in Egypt and in Mesopotamia collected the notes I had arranged, so that I had been able to spread that teaching throughout three separate armies in my Indian tour.

The success attained at the School of Gunnery (which was once for all established in India) was largely due to the able assistance given me by the officers and N.C.O.s on my staff.

Captain Martin, R.H.A., Lieutenants Theaker and Addis, as assistant instructors, worked admirably, and I could not have wished for more tactful and efficient fellows to help me.

I was well reported on by the Commander-in-Chief. It was the best and most gratifying report I had ever received—as a result of my labours in India.

This report, which might have helped me considerably as regards promotion, etc., was pigeon-holed at W.O. and never brought to light until two years later, when it was too late to help me.

On arrival home, I reported at Whitehall. They feigned ignorance of my mission to India, the subject was of no interest to them.

I was required for training at home and my promotion to Lieut.-Colonel, only a temporary one, would now cease.

It was useless to argue and to remind them that I had been assured by the A.A.G. at War Office, who appointed me Commandant, that on reaching home I should be allowed to return to a brigade in France.

I left Whitehall utterly disgusted and disheartened.

It was only by the friendship of the A.A.G. that a few weeks later I was again at the Front.

CHAPTER XIX

PALESTINE

FOREWORD—BRUSH WITH THE STAFF AT TARANTO—"SCATTERS" WILSON,
M.P.—RECONNAISSANCE IN THE DESERT—BEFORE BEERSHEBA—BRITISH
YEOMANRY—GENERAL BULFIN—TAKING OF JERUSALEM—OPERATIONS
NORTH OF JERUSALEM—OPERATIONS EAST OF JERUSALEM



R. W. T. MASSEY has supplied us with a fine account of the Palestine Campaign, 1917-1919, in *How Jerusalem was Won* and *Allenby's Final Triumph*, from information he was able to gather when out there—an official account.

The following very modest story of happenings during the battles up to Es Salt was written by the author in the firing line, and is a first-hand account.

Mr. W. T. Massey borrowed a few notes from this yarn, and the *R.A. Commemoration Book* also made use of extracts from the following story.

In August, 1917, I sailed for Alexandria *en route* to Palestine in charge of many officers and drafts of twenty-one different regiments. We travelled for ten days from Cherbourg to Taranto in the heel of Italy.

Thanks to the staff arrangements at this camp, of which the less said the better, we lived for five days in abject misery. And, had we not been allowed to drive daily into the little seaside port of Taranto, should have fared meagrely as regards food.

As it was I was obliged to leave many sick men behind at this camp, who had contracted malaria fever and other diseases due entirely to the sanitation, or rather the want of it. Colonel "Scatters" Wilson, M.P., who was on his way to his Yeomanry

regiment in Egypt, asked me to write a report on this camp. This I did, addressing the report to Sir John Cowans, Q.M.G. Finally the Embarkation Officers endeavoured to overcrowd the ship *Heroic*, in which we were to sail for Alexandria. I carefully inspected the ship two days previous to our sailing, and pointed out to the staff that owing to one complete deck being condemned on medical grounds she could not carry any more than 550 troops. I was told that was nonsense.

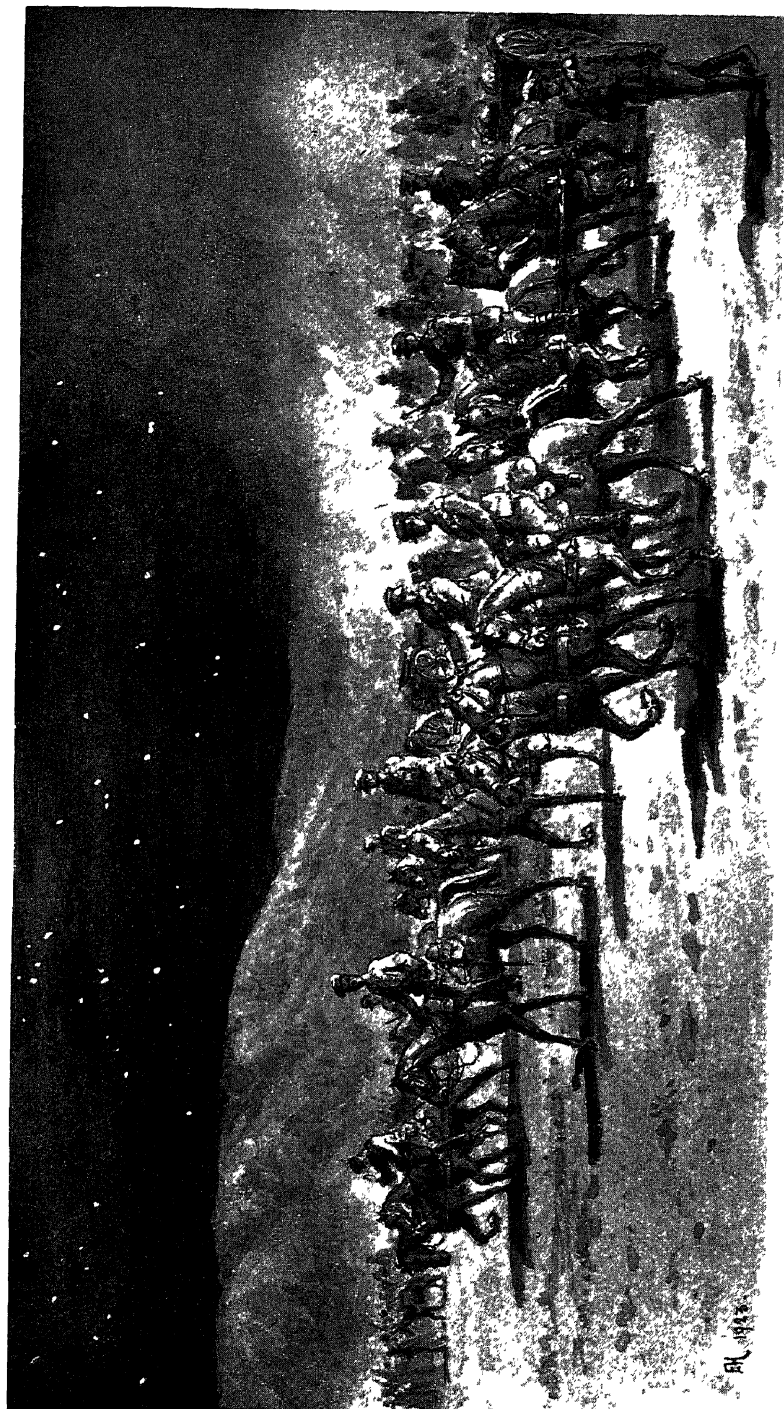
On my refusing to sail as O.C. Ship unless they turned off 220 of the 720 crammed on board, I became most unpopular, the chief principle of the embarkation staff being to fill the ship and to get rid of the troops regardless of space or possible scarcity of food and water. I was surrounded by infuriated Staff Officers, owing to my refusal to sail until the excess number had been disembarked.

The Embarkation Officer informed me that the Commandant at Taranto had sent a message by telephone telling me to mind my own business. I told him that that was exactly what I was doing, my business at that moment being to make sure that my men were not suffocated or starved.

This further incensed this insufferable Staff Officer, who saw all his hopes of packing us off pell-mell vanishing. He told me that Major-General Sir Richard — was in the Commandant's office and had himself telephoned up to ask who the O.C. Ship might be, and that he should be hanged at the yard arm.

The Staff Officer further added as a warning that Major-General Sir Richard — would be a traveller in my ship. He said that furthermore this General Officer would require the best cabin. However, on this point I enlightened the Staff Officer, saying that on no account could Sir Richard Cœur de Lion, or whatever his name was, be given the best cabin, as I should require this myself; nor was I, I added, particularly interested in the welfare of this creature who wished me hanged at the yard arm.

I then demanded to see the Superintendent Naval Officer, who at once most breezily agreed to disembark the 220 men,



AS THE GUNS APPROACHED IN LINE THE SUSPECTING TURK COMMENCED RIFLE FIRING



BRITISH YEOMANRY WITH SWORDS DRAWN, CHARGING L'ENTRE À TERRE

EX. 1. 2

so taking the whole affair out of the hands of the military authorities.

Sir Richard ——— came on board, and on further acquaintance proved to be a good fellow, *heartily agreeing* with what I had done in defiance of the Staff at Taranto.

Young Fletcher acted as my Adjutant in my capacity of O.C. Trains and Ships outward bound, and very useful he proved to be. Curiously enough, he had previously worked with me for a few days on the Somme as Adjutant to the 87th Brigade, for which Brigade I had written the orders and made all arrangements for its advance at the opening of that battle.

After spending three days at Alexandria, a town I already knew in pre-war days, I was hurried up to the Palestine front to take command of a battery.

The army in Palestine required most careful and strenuous training for the campaign which was before us, as up till then these troops, many of them, had seen little enough of the real thing.

The officers I was destined to work with were of an exceptionally high order—many of them City men—shrewd, capable and brave.

The Commander of our group of guns, Colonel H. Bayley, an old H.A.C. officer, was energetic and courageous to a degree.

Tel el Fara, the spot in which I found my battery by the side of a dried-up river bed, with its barren and desolate surroundings could be well described as Dante's Inferno. Here the opposing forces were quite ten miles apart. Very few tracks crossed the big stretches of sand. It was necessary to have some knowledge of the stars in this weird country to find your way at night across miles of desert, and by day and night an oil compass was invaluable.

At this time the 60th Division made five reconnaissances of importance. These were carried out as follows :

A screen of cavalry would go out in the early morning. At about 9 a.m. small parties of mounted officers under cover of the screen would ride out, each party having previously been given

its task. The whole party of 300 or 400 officers would assemble at some point in the desert, and from there each group would ride off independently to its allotted area for reconnaissance.

These days entailed a ride of at least forty miles. As we approached the enemy positions, a series of trenches or sangars high up above the desert, commanding as they did the whole country to the west over which we worked, the Turk commenced shelling and sniping, so that it was far from pleasant reconnoitring for artillery platforms, the job we had been given to do, close under the enemy's strong defensive position. I remember on one occasion when the firing had been more active than usual, and we had not completed our task on account of the difficulty of further approaching the line of sangars which were manned by Turkish snipers, I took one subaltern with me and we rode at full gallop over the little brown hillocks. As we topped the rise of the next hillock we were met by a volley of bullets, one shaving my helmet, another between my horse's legs, until we were out of sight down the next slope. But the ground was tricky, and one could never be certain of being under cover of rifle-fire, the country here being cut up into small rises; also the possibility of being surrounded and cut off by Turkish cavalry kept us continually on the *qui vive*.

Then the long, weary march back through heavy sand in the moonlight told severely on the horses. And as we withdrew, covering twenty miles or more of desert, Turkish cavalry would cautiously issue forth and reoccupy positions they had temporarily withdrawn from, in place of our cavalry, so that it was very necessary not to lose one's way on the home journey.

On October 21st the 179th Infantry Brigade, commanded by Brig.-General —, marched boldly out into the desert land which formed No Man's Land. We accompanied this force. We marched at night, and by morning, October 22nd, had occupied the watering-places which existed between our main army and the Turk in front of Beersheba. We remained at Bir Esani for six days, and on October 28th the remainder of the 60th Division reinforced us, and with the Anzac cavalry

on our right we moved to Abu Galyon in preparation for the advance on Beersheba. On the night of the 31/1st the whole of Allenby's army moved for attack.

It was a bright moonlight night. Strict orders had been given for silence on the march, and every precaution made to render this approach march a complete surprise. It was ordered that all horses should be muzzled to prevent neighing. However, this order had to be moderated as regards draught horses drawing guns through heavy sand, nor did the muzzling of the "hairies" have the slightest effect, for they neighed as cheerily as ever.

I consider that this approach march, the occupation of troops to allotted areas, the selection of artillery platforms to positions previously reconnoitred by day under great difficulties, the organization of communications throughout the Division, etc., all to be completed before daylight, was one of the greatest achievements in this victorious campaign. The battery halted at a point on the old Moses road (Khalasa-Beersheba road), now in places covered by the drifting sand, and presently left the long, endless column which wound through the undulating desert like a snake, glimmering here and there with the flash of harness in the moonlight. From this point I led the guns to their appointed position through the intricate and trackless sea of hillocks which existed on each side of the old road; as the guns approached in line the suspecting Turk commenced rifle-firing, and it seemed impossible that I should get into position without casualties. We were now a few hundred yards from the enemy's position, and the noise of the gun teams and rumbling guns caused one considerable anxiety. Then the difficulty of recognizing in the weird moonlight the exact position to be occupied was considerable—the shape of the hills and rocks to be remembered after the one fleeting reconnaissance of a few seconds under rifle-fire which was all I had been able to make. Furthermore, the observation post had not been reconnoitred at all, nor had the enemy trenches, on to which I was responsible for bringing fire, been seen up to

that time. And when it is remembered that an hour after dawn our infantry were to advance, and that by that time our guns must have registered and be prepared to make good those trenches—the task was no light one.

At streak of dawn young Philpott, one of my subalterns, and I were lying on the smooth hill-top, with a few stones heaped up in front of our heads as a shield, spotting out the enemy trenches on which we were to bear fire. Aerial photographs were the means of our recognizing our objectives (for every battery had been given its allotted trenches), and soon after daylight the British front was one blaze of gun-fire, the registration of enemy trenches and strongholds having commenced. Unlike the front in France, there was very little wire to be cut. Just before our infantry left their trenches to attack we dropped a shell right on top of a machine-gun squad, killing the whole detachment—a lucky shot. We rated the front trenches until our infantry were within seventy yards of them, then lifted the fire on to the flying Turk. It was a great sight to see our fellows charge forward. All the time bullets spluttered on the hard ground round about us, one bullet removing a stone which screened my head. One poor fellow lay dead at our side, but casualties were few.

Swiftly we advanced the guns to a forward position, bivouacking that night beyond the trenches we had captured, and the same night Beersheba was entered by our infantry (the 179th Brigade), not by the Anzac mounted corps as was reported, who, however, arrived there after the taking of Beersheba by London troops, 60th Division.

The XXth Corps consisted of 60th, 53rd and 74th (Yeomanry) Divisions. The plan for the operations which had resulted in the capture of Beersheba and Gaza was as follows :

The XXth Corps was to make the main attack, capture the former town and drive the enemy's left flank, while the cavalry worked on the outer flank. The XXIst Corps and the Navy were to occupy the enemy's attention at Gaza during the early stages at the battle by a continuous bombardment followed by

an attack on his defences between the sea and Umbrella Hill. This attack was timed to take place between the attack on Beersheba and the Kauwukah System in order to prevent the enemy reserves from moving against the XXth Corps during the second attack.

An extract from the official account given out in November read as follows :

“The attack on Beersheba commenced at dawn on October 31st from the south and south-west, and was undertaken by the 60th (London) and 74th (Yeomanry) Divisions. The 53rd Division and the Imperial Camel Corps Brigade were in position north of Saba Wadi to protect the left flank of the Corps, and demonstrated against the enemy trenches north of the Wadi. Advancing with the utmost gallantry, magnificently supported by our guns of all calibres, the 60th had actually carried the whole of the enemy's first line round Hill 1070 by half-past eight in the morning, and by two o'clock in the afternoon the two attacking Divisions had swept over the enemy's second line. The 74th Division then swung to their left and took all the enemy works to the north of the Wadi Saba. Meantime the cavalry had worked their way round to the north-east of the town to cut off the escape of the enemy, and captured some 1300 prisoners and 8 guns. The town itself was entered by the 60th Division infantry just after sundown, and the water supply which was essential to the latter operations was secured with the assistance of the cavalry. The prisoners and booty of the XXth Corps, as the result of the day's operations, consisted of 25 officers and 394 other ranks with 6 field-guns—these figures being exclusive of those captured by the cavalry.

On November 1st the 53rd (Welsh) Division moved to the north of Beersheba and was soon in touch with enemy in the mountains. The advance of the 60th and 53rd was apparently a great surprise to the enemy, who hurriedly collected portions of four Divisions to oppose them. The task of our Divisions from now and until the final breaking of the Turkish centre on November 6th was to hold off this large enemy force, which

could only be achieved by continuous fighting under very difficult conditions. Owing to the necessity of building up a sufficient forward reserve of ammunition and supplies, and to the fact that a bad *khamseen* blew steadily for three days, the second phase of the operations could not be undertaken until six days after the capture of Beersheba.

Meanwhile the XXIst Corps had captured the whole of the enemy's first line at Gaza, from Umbrella Hill to the sea, and were inflicting heavy casualties on the garrison by continuous bombardment and in the repelling of many counter-attacks."

Beersheba (or Bir es-seb'a) is, they say, one of the most ancient sites on record. Abraham here received his command to sacrifice Isaac. We descended the hills which lie to the west of the little town, crossed a wide, almost dried-up stony river-bed, by the side of which gorged-looking pariah dogs tore at the vitals of dead horses already distended by the hot sun. At the ford a Turkish wagon had failed to get away, and the two horses now lay dead with their heads in a pool of blood: a portion of the driver's garments hung over the tail-board. A steep incline led up from the dismal river-bed to the main street of Beersheba, a cluster of white square-built houses. A few scared Arabs and Bedouins cowered at the street corners as we approached. Water abounded in patches in the Wadi and in the town, as the modern Arabic name signifies, "Well of the Seven."

On Sunday, November 4th, the 60th Division made a forced march to Irgieg. Very severe going it was in a country where few roads existed, where any change in dispositions of movements of large columns of troops of all arms must be skilfully concealed, and where men raised large clouds of dust, crossing deep wadis and moving over tracks heavy with sand dust.

The second phase had as a main objective the water supply of Sharia, which involved the capture of the Kauwukah System of trenches, and was to be carried out by the 10th, 60th and 74th Divisions. At the same time the 53rd Division was to attack Tel el Khuteilfeh and protect the right flank of the XXth Corps.

In the main attack everything depended on the progress of the 74th Division on the right, who had as a task the capture of all the enemy trenches on the east of the railway. These were strongly held by the enemy and bristled with machine-guns, and in addition the attack had of necessity to take place over very open ground. The 74th, however, though only after very heavy fighting, captured all their objectives, taking many prisoners, 23 machine-guns and 8 guns; and, with their right flank secured, the 60th and 10th Divisions quickly stormed the main Kauwukah System.

The 60th were then reorganized with the utmost rapidity and drove straight at Sharia with orders to protect the water supply and form a bridge-head. In doing this they experienced much opposition, but succeeded in securing their objectives by the following morning, capturing many prisoners and four more guns.

At dawn on November 7th the 10th Division was ordered to storm the Hapeira Tepe Redoubt. This work was of great natural strength, defended with numerous machine-guns, and well supported by artillery, but fell to our attack after a sharp fight. This affair resulted in the capture of several guns, including two 5.9 Krupp howitzers of the latest type and quite undamaged, and in the securing of the all-important water supply.

The position on the 7th was that the enemy centre was pierced and a gap prepared for the cavalry. This result was due not only to the direct advance of the 10th, 60th and 74th Divisions but also largely to the resolution with which the 53rd Division beat off all attempts by the enemy to attack the right flank of the 74th Division. The enemy was therefore compelled to evacuate the fortress of Gaza, and our cavalry, with the 60th Division representing the XXth Corps as a flying infantry column, was enabled to be loosed after the enemy. The 60th fought hard during the night of November 6/7th, and during November 7th and 8th, and pressed by the XXIst Corps and our cavalry, the enemy was forced across the Wadi Hesi—abandoning in his

precipitate retreat the munitions and stores which had taken him six months to collect.

The total capture reported of the XXth Corps up to November 8th consisted of about 72 officers, 1774 other ranks, 7 howitzers, 22 field-guns, 1 A.A. gun, 7 trench mortars, 36 machine-guns, several million rounds of S.A. and several thousand rounds of gun ammunition. The battle area had covered such a large extent of ground that no accurate count had been able to be made at that time.

On the night of the 6th, after a very heavy day's fighting, we found ourselves bivouacked behind a mound which overlooked Sharia railway bridge. It had been a hard day's work and a very successful one too. It was a fine sight to see batteries of artillery under heavy shell-fire galloping into action in the open, and our infantry under the barrage fire seizing position after position with great gallantry. We had now come into open undulating country, in which a great field of view was given of the battle. I went forward alone to reconnoitre for a position. Whilst I lay down with my head just above the grass a Turkish battery chose this inopportune moment to register the very spot I was in, sending down three shells at a time. I was right in the fire, but escaped untouched. The battery commander on my left was shot through the leg. I had several narrow escapes that day.

On the morning of the 7th I got orders to advance my guns to Sharia railway bridge. We were in action by 7 a.m. I rode forward to reconnoitre, and found one of the battalion commanders in bad plight. Three enemy machine-guns were annoying his headquarters. I told him I would bring one gun up to where we stood at the moment, within 1600 yards of a small white building in which the Turks had fixed up their machine-guns, and would endeavour to knock the machine-guns out. Young Philpott galloped back and brought up one of his guns. An exciting moment. I directed the fire: shell after shell went hurtling into the building until we saw the detachments flying out behind, when we raised the fire on to

their retreating forms. That night the three deserted machine-guns were in our hands.

But this was only the beginning of one of the busiest days I remember. Except for one other battery of our own Brigade, all the other batteries of the Division had failed to put in an appearance, so that we were doing the work of three brigades. I chose my observation station on the summit of a big mound by the Sharia railway bridge, which commanded the country north and west. The Turks, whom we could see on the far ridge, repeatedly attempted to counter-attack. Every time their front wave rose to charge, our six guns ripped salvo after salvo into them, so that they could not move. When later we took that ridge, the tale was easily told. I was obliged to cover with my guns 120 degrees of front, and fire was called for from 7 a.m. until it was dark. The hardest day I remember, and a sad one too, for although we were again victorious, for my battery it was at great cost.

One of the brigadiers brought all his staff close to my observation post, and they were crowded together on a shelf which projected on the side of the mound just below the summit. A battery of 5.9, manned by German gunners, came into action and shelled our mound frightfully, sending down groups of twenty and thirty shells right on to us. As they came plunging down the noise was deafening, and the shrieks of desperately wounded men were heart-breaking. Ten poor fellows within a few feet of where I lay were killed outright, and many others were dreadful to look at. My wagon line was situated in a deep wadi shielded from view by the mound. However, it did not escape. I ran to the edge of the mound and looked down. A pitiful sight to see the horses—twelve killed, and others, poor dumb beasts, standing in their ripped harness with blood dripping from terrible wounds. Twenty-six precious horses rendered useless. I shouted orders to the mess cook, who, with his assistant, both absolutely indifferent to danger, were turning over the still, unrecognizable forms who lay alongside their horses and wagons. I recommended the mess cook and

his mate for bravery. I lost twenty-five fellows that day. Hastily directions were given, and, in spite of all the chaos, what remained of the wagon line was swiftly moved up the river-bed to a safe place before another storm of 5.9 shells came on us again.

It was a wonder that anything lived on this mound. Major Price, a howitzer battery commander, and I found ourselves lying flat on a dead Turk in a shallow trench on top of the mound. That night we advanced and bivouacked round our guns in action on the ground we had wrested from the Turks.

Next day was a running fight. We had left the Wadi Sharia where in ancient days the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac fed their flocks as the Bedouins do still. We moved abreast of the infantry, dropping our trails and shelling ridge after ridge. The whole operation called for swift work at the guns; hurried advances, a section of guns thrown forward and flung into the firing line. The motto was "Push on," at all costs. It was a great sight to see the whole Division moving on and on: the attacking waves, the Battalion Headquarters about 200 yards behind, followed by camel transports, the camels led by Egyptians in their long blue gowns—and so on—ever moving on over, at times, shell-swept areas; nothing could stop these moving waves of men and animals. In spite of the worn-out horses and the tired men, I found myself right up forward with one section hurried into action in our attempt to catch the now flying Turk, whom we could see away in the distance, retreating down a wadi. Enemy guns were firing a short distance ahead of us. Behind me I heard a roar, and looking back I saw two British squadrons of Yeomanry, with swords drawn, charging *ventre à terre* behind my two guns in action. The leader shouted to me, and I gave him the direction of where the enemy guns appeared to be. So they swept on over the open grass hills, taking the hostile guns in flank. When, a few minutes later, I limbered up and crossed the next low ridge it was a wonderful sight presented to us: three German 77 mm.

batteries (twelve guns) in line, one battery surprised on the left flank with every gun pointing directly over its neighbour, all the gunners lying round their guns, some clinging on to wheels, other limp forms flung over the guns. All was silence, because Death reigned supreme. A German officer was on the right flank with his head slashed nearly off, with revolver still in his hand. All about British Yeomanry were lying huddled alongside horses with gaping wounds, the helpless beasts waiting to be put out of pain. The guns had fired point blank at the charging mass. It was here that Colonel Borton (serving at that time in the 2/22nd London Regt.) won his V.C. That was at Huj.

British Yeomanry in this campaign were splendid. Traditions of all sorts, regimental or otherwise, are little thought of in these days. Indeed the ceaseless rush after wealth or votes or other colourless pursuits allows no time for the hustler of every class to pause in his strife for prominence (or doubtfully earned reputation) and to consider how it was that England won her prowess in the old days and how she still wins her laurels in unrecorded corners.

It seems no part of the Recorder's duties (whoever the Recorder may be) to remind us occasionally that England's renown all the world over for fair play, for chivalry, indeed for her finer points, is the result of *traditions and customs* handed down to us for generations. The fair name we still hold to-day is chiefly due to Britain's loyal subjects, airmen, sailors, soldiers and civilians doing their bit unheard of, many of them living their lives in the far outposts of empire, spreading their influence and justice amongst their fellow-subjects of many races for ever conscious of our great heritage. The real source of all that is splendid in this nation originated early in our history with the solid foundation and backbone of Great Britain, i.e. the country-bred squires, the great and little owners of land, and their yeomen dependents who worked in their cause and loved them : alas ! a breed fast vanishing. It was these men, not only in their example of loyalty to king and country, but also

in their fighting qualities, who rode as Crusaders to the Holy Land under Richard Cœur de Lion ; lords and retainers, who, master and man, from Nottingham and Warwick, Dorset and Gloucester, and other counties, again in this war fought side by side against the enemies of England. It is an actual fact that there were instances in Palestine, in that brisk affair at Huj, of squires and their yeomen, both descendants of those former Crusaders, riding knee to knee for those guns.

Young Philpott was my right hand all through these operations, a brave lad, and I recommended him for gallantry, for which he was awarded the Military Cross.

That night we rested a few miles from Huj. The staff arrangements for water do not bear recording. Our drivers and horses trekked for twenty-three miles through the night in search of wells. This, after marching and fighting all day. Fifty-three hours had elapsed before we were able to water the animals. When finally the worn-out gun teams reached a watering-place, many of them fell down exhausted at the wells. The question of water was a cause of great anxiety. It was only through the extreme courtesy of General Bulfin, commanding the XXIst Corps on our left, that I was able at that late hour to water my horses. How I blessed the old soldier, in whose area I was poaching, for his kindly consideration. My brother in the Rifle Brigade had been his Brigade Major in the first days of the war when General Bulfin landed the first British force on French soil.

On November 13th the 60th Division marched to Nejileh (or Eglon of the Bible). Nejileh, once a city of Judah, lies on open down land, and formed an excellent camping ground. But we were not to stay there long, as it was considered that we were now too far to a flank and isolated from the remainder of the XXth Corps. So we received orders to return to Sharia by way of Abu Dilakh. This constant moving greatly delayed supplies, and sometimes we were very hungry, and horses, who had suffered from long marches, were on short rations.

The battlefield of Sharia on which we camped was sprinkled

with dead men and horses unburied, so that the flies became a plague; at moments the back of one's jacket and one's cap were black with flies, and, although we were always hungry, food was an abomination in these surroundings.

On November 19th we became a flying column to pursue the Turk up to Jerusalem. Our first march brought us to Ali el Muntar, the hill on which Samson is said to have carried the gates of Gaza. We were bivouacked in a great plain to the east of this hill. Rain storms commenced here. We then marched to Rab el Wad in four days, more or less hugging the west coast as far as El Mejdel, from thence in a north-east direction to Rab el Wad, shifting camp each night and covering about fifty miles in that period. Here we remained four nights at the entrance to the mountain range of Judah.

Bulfin's Corps had already, after severe fighting, forced the mountain pass ahead of us with his little Ghurka Rifles, some of whom were seen in the thick of the fight, having lost their knives, hurling rocks at the enemy and charging on. This road led finally over the mountains to Jerusalem, twenty miles further east. The long column advanced up the pass with its steep and very long gradient, a severe pull up for the worn gun teams, now chiefly consisting of mules; on either side rocky banks and terraced slopes, here and there clumps of olive trees. This wild glen is called Wadi Ali. At the top of the pass a glorious view presented itself of the Plain of Sharon and the blue Mediterranean away to the west.

On arrival at Enab (or El'Anab), "the village of grapes," on November 27th, we were once more in action up in the rocky hills beyond the Wadi Ghoreb (or Ravens' Valley, "raven" of the Bible meaning "thieves"). Here we found the enemy in a very strong defensive position in front of Jerusalem. We remained in this position immediately in front of the Jerusalem position for nine days.

One day I visited the little church of St. Jeremiah in the valley at the foot of Enab; it is reported to be the most beautiful specimen of Crusading work existing in the Holy Land. Christ

is said to have bathed His feet in the little well close by. The building was erected in the year 1140. Here we were able to get barrels of good red wine.

On December 7th we took up an advanced position on the Kustul ridge, opposite the Turkish defences covering Jerusalem. Neby Samwal, the ancient Mispheh of Benjamin, was the key of the enemy's position, and gave us considerable trouble. Its mosque, standing as it did on a high peak, was conspicuous from every side, and was strongly held by the Turks. The ancient mosque, dating from 1157, was utterly shattered by shells from both sides, British and Turk, and the dead lay thick round about this stronghold. At Kustul we remained two nights, and it was from here we fought the battle which ended in the taking of Jerusalem. Neby Samwal changed hands two or three times and was only taken after desperate fighting. The rugged Kustul ridge overlooked a very deep, broad glen in which lay the village of Ain Karim (where in a grotto John the Baptist was born), and, just below the mosque of Kustul, the village of Kulonieh clung to the side of the ravine. The prospect from our steep ridge, 4000 feet above sea level, was wild, barren and majestic in the extreme. On the opposite ridge, with the broad valley between, the Turks were entrenched; machine-guns well posted guarded the approaches up the very steep-sided ravines which led to Jerusalem.

It fell to my lot to be the first British soldier in Jerusalem. Just after 8 a.m. on December 9th I found myself at the Jaffa Gate. The following is an account of the actual surrender of the Holy City, which fell before the 60th (London) and 53rd (Welsh) Divisions.

At eight o'clock in the morning of December 9th, 1917, the Mayor of the city and the Chief of Police offered to surrender the City of Jerusalem to three artillery officers. This was accepted.

The M.G.R.A. in Palestine asked me to write an account of what actually happened on December 9th, on which day Jerusalem fell.

There seems to be some considerable controversy on the part of one or two officers of high rank on the subject as to who first entered Jerusalem. As regards any individual claim to be the first man to enter Jerusalem, it is difficult to recognize particular credit to be attached to this fact. Nor is it of any great interest except possibly to the individual concerned.

The first formed party to enter the town arrived at my urgent request—a mounted party of gunners, consisting of Colonel Bayley, commanding 303rd Brigade R.F.A., two artillery subalterns, and seven armed artillerymen. Brig.-General Watson, commanding the 180th Infantry Brigade, accompanied this party, followed half an hour later by one company of the 180th Infantry Brigade, 60th Division, which I also asked for to keep order in the town. Between the hours of 10.30 a.m. and 11 a.m. the 53rd Division entered the town from the south-west, along the Bethlehem road past the Jaffa Gate, very soon after the arrival of the infantry company (180th Infantry Brigade).

The surrender of Jerusalem was handed to Colonel Bayley in my presence by the Mayor of Jerusalem at a point about a mile and a quarter from the city gates. Previous to this, Major W. C. Beck, 301st Brigade R.F.A. (later killed in the Jordan valley), and Major F. R. Barry, 302nd Brigade R.F.A., had made their way to the outskirts of the town and had met the Mayor with his white flag of truce. Here is the little story, such as it is :

The 60th Division had been given the task of capturing the very strong position immediately west of Jerusalem, which included Ain Karim, Deir Desin and Kulonieh trench systems. This position should have been impregnable. The natural features of this absurdly strong defensive position afforded the enemy every advantage. 303rd Brigade guns were posted in a position under cover of the Kustul Ridge, near two trees which marked the sky line, immediately south of the mosque, about 4000 feet above sea level.

December 8th was spent covering our infantry in their assault on, and fine advance up, the mountains on the opposite side of

the Kulonieh valley. That night it poured with rain and blew a gale of wind, and when we remembered that two nights ago it had taken us, thanks to the swampy ground and severe climb up to our position, eight hours, i.e. all through a soaking night to reach Kustul, it seemed to us, as we shivered in the storm, the unbearable last straw that our advance next morning might be hindered and perhaps made impossible by another wet night. However, at daybreak on the 9th, we succeeded in unearthing two guns; two others refused to move; the third section of my battery I had fortunately kept close to the main Jerusalem-Enab road, and with this last one we moved off down to Kulonieh, leaving the other four guns to follow as soon as they could be pulled out of the soft ground.

Then on foot, with one subaltern, the Group Commander (Colonel Bayley) and Major Price, we faced the zigzag Roman road which leads to Jerusalem and runs parallel to the Lifta high road, a tremendous pull up for the tired horses. The Lifta-Kulonieh high road was fully exposed to the north, and it appeared at this stage of the operations out of the question to make use of it; hence the reason for our taking this precipitous track.

Anticipating every moment that we should be met with machine-gun-fire and shells, we trudged warily up this steep road, followed by the only gun left, with its eight thin horses, which had survived the camel-block descent from Kustul.

Thus it was that, meeting no opposition and seeing none of our infantry, we reached the top and found ourselves not rushed into a bloody fight, but taking a very lovely sunny Sunday morning walk towards the outskirts of Jerusalem. Presently we saw a crowd of women and children led by an official carrying a white flag of truce. This individual turned out to be the Mayor of Jerusalem with his entourage of Arab police and laughing girls. Colonel Bayley was formally handed over the papers which purported to be the entire surrender of Jerusalem to the British. Colonel Bayley and the Mayor were at once photographed by an American, who also acted as



THE SURRENDER OF JERUSALEM HANDED TO THREE ARTILLERY OFFICERS



A RUSSIAN WOMAN CAME FORWARD OUT OF THE CROWD WITH AN OFFERING
OF NEWLY BAKED CAKE

interpreter. The Mayor then pointed out the importance of having the post office taken over immediately and of using all necessary precautions to ensure communication with the enemy being cut off. Bayley requested me to do this forthwith.

Leaving the gun and its detachment halted on the road, I took with me an Arab policeman mounted on a grey pony, and my orderly, no one else being available at that time.

At 8.20 a.m. I started to ride into Jerusalem, about a mile and three-quarters distant. As I reached it and rode through the streets the policeman shouted wildly that the British were already coming. People at once appeared from nowhere, running and shouting and waving their hands in welcome. I rode towards the Jaffa Gate to the house of Hussein Selim, the Head of Municipality, and demanded the keys of the post office. I explained in French to this official that I was the Chief of Police of the British Army now entering the city (a subterfuge which at this stage I considered advisable). I required, I said, every Arab policeman to be made available at once. My orders would be implicitly obeyed: if from this time any communication with the enemy continued he knew what punishment to expect; all employees at the post office to assemble at that place; the house to be surrounded while I searched. These orders were carefully attended to, and well carried out by the Arab Chief of Police, who had arrived on the scene.

Then I turned up the street through a dense, cheering crowd which had to be forced back by a number of Arab policemen who had settled all round me like flies from goodness knows where. I searched the post office, and placed a policeman over one room in which were cupboards of stamps and official books. I found all wires cut. The employees were all herded into one room. Then I came out of the building to find the place in front of the post office filled with hundreds of uneasy faces awaiting the next move.

Here I stood on the doorsteps for two hours anxiously watching for British troops. The whole place and streets leading therefrom were now choked with a sea of faces of every hue,

and I appeared to be the centre of interest. Every time I lit a fresh cigarette, or sipped another cup of coffee, the crowd cheered. I spoke to many officials in French.

A woman of Russian descent ran out from the crowd and wept on my shoulder tears of joy, or possibly sorrow, it was not clear which. She mumbled out a story of her father being dragged off, insufficiently clothed, by Turks to Jericho, at the same time expressing considerable relief at the sight of a British soldier at last.

Scenes such as this succeeded each other in rapid succession, and "His Excellency," as I was dubbed, had to deal with variously assorted deputations, and further weeping women. Coffee on silver trays was brought to me at intervals, the period of suspense and anxiety being a long one.

Still no British Army arrived. After the first hour of waiting an Arab gentleman asked me why the British did not arrive, as the people were becoming uneasy, and the Turks were still in the town. I told him that in good time they would be here, and said that even now the British guns were just up the road. An hour and a half went by, still no sign of British troops.

The Mussulmans were showing signs of unrest—why did the British not come? Could I possibly send and ask for a display of troops of some sort? They could not answer for any trouble, as the people had been worked up to a state of uncertainty. I reassured a well-dressed Arab who spoke to me, and asked him why the need of hurry, and added that presently I should require breakfast. At once a man was despatched to prepare breakfast for His Excellency.

Then suddenly round the corner appeared about fifty Turkish soldiers in file, led by their officers. It was with the utmost relief that I saw them turn the corner after they had marched past me, appearing to ignore my presence there.

Then another Russian woman, about sixty years old, came forward out of the crowd and solemnly made me an offering of a newly baked cake. This woman, it was whispered in my ear, had been starving for many days. She would wish to show,

in this manner, her gratitude for being delivered out of the hands of the Turk by the British. I bowed, broke a crumb of the warm cake and placed it in my mouth, handing her back the food; this caused a murmur of approval from the crowd.

Finally, after waiting for just on two hours, I whispered to my horse-holder to ride slowly past the crowd, then, when clear, to ride hard up the road and to find an officer of artillery or infantry and tell him of the urgent necessity of having troops at once in the city. This he did, and in about forty minutes General Watson, commanding 180th Infantry Brigade, rode down with Colonel Bayley and an escort consisting of one of my sergeants and six armed gunners with two subalterns of artillery. The welcome we received at all hands was a sincere one. "Is it really true that we shall be under British rule? God be praised, etc., etc." A few minutes later the 53rd Division swung up the Bethlehem road.

I handed over the post office to the military police of the 53rd Division, then, mindful of my breakfast, rode away to the house of a rich Arab, where a sumptuous meal was rapidly eaten in the presence of probably twenty relations of the owner, including a grandmother and many grandchildren and aunts, most of whom had for days been hiding in cellars and caves. Indeed, many friends met outside the post office while I was there who had been hiding for thirty days, and fell on each other's necks in their gratitude to God, or to the British, or possibly to both, for their delivery from the Turk and the damp caves.

All was not yet over, because as I left the Arab's house a shrieking nun rushed at me, imploring help, saying in French that Turkish soldiers were ransacking the church opposite the nunnery, which also was threatened, so she said. So I rode on, and found four Turks in the act of filling a cart with church property. They threw up their hands (they were unarmed) when they saw me, and I marched them off, riding back and handing them over to the first infantry officer I came across.

Afterwards, with the help of this officer, I placed guards on the church, nunnery and other buildings near by.

Sergeant Lawrence, one of my Nos. 1, had formed one of the party to come down with General Watson, and, when I sent him back at Watson's request to bring up hurriedly one infantry company, he met on his way, at the corner of a small street, twelve unarmed Turks. These he took charge of, signing to them to remain where they were until he returned. *This they did*, and a little later were marched off by the infantry company. This totalled sixteen prisoners.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Jewish Temple were among the places of beauty and interest which I visited with my sergeant-major and a guide on this first day of the taking of Jerusalem. So no time was lost.

An order, by Allenby, prohibiting everyone from touring the city was issued owing to reports to the effect that many places of interest were mined by the Turks. However, we had already visited all these places, and obviously the mines, bombs and other machines of destruction had not exploded.

I rejoined my battery just as we had orders to move north, and at the outskirts we dropped our trails and shelled the ridge to north-west of the Mount of Olives, where for a time the Turk offered stubborn resistance—meeting bayonet with bayonet. From the guns we could see the Turks running along the wall, behind which they attempted to re-form. We shelled the wall heavily with H.E. and low bursts of shrapnel, at short range, while the infantry advanced up the slope. A pretty fight.

During the rather difficult time in Jerusalem one Issa Mousabek, a Syrian, assisted me as interpreter. It was with his kindly help that I was able to reassure the many worn and anxious people about me. The deputations of old creatures, Arabs, Jews, Syrians, hysterical women (some German), some of importance, many of none; to all their anxious enquiries as to the safeguarding of persons and property I answered that from now they were under British rule—there was no need for anxiety; British rule was a fair and just one, no harm would

come to them and theirs. One could see the instant relief in their tired faces—even tears of gratitude.

During these days we put up in a Jew's house, and were supplied with good food and red wine, wine of the country, by Issa Mousabek, who helped us in very many ways. Later, when we were in action far out in the rocky hills, this Syrian sent out donkeys laden with vegetables as a present for the battery. Both Syrians and Jews were very grateful to us for their deliverance from the Turk.

My rewards for activities in the taking of the Holy City were two: the presentation of a sword by the Arab Police who had assisted me, and who, *entre nous*, had no right to give it to me; the other award was the large, rusty key of the ancient building I had captured . . . which I presented to myself. These two trophies I possess to this day.

There are many members of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, male and female, who hold this (originally Teutonic) Military and Religious Order. They have never entered the city of Jerusalem.

Some day, at some important ceremony, I shall hang my rusty key (a foot long) on a chain round my neck. I shall risk fouling my shirt front . . . what care I? Any remarks from Knights of St. John of Jerusalem will be met with coldness. At least I have entered that Holy City and they have not . . . I hold the key to the position round my neck.

“The Times,” Friday, December 9th, 1927.

TEN YEARS AGO

THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM

A Memorable Sunday. The Surrender.

There is now general agreement as to the details of the surrender.

At about 8.30 a.m. Colonel Bayley and Major Cooke, 303rd Brigade R.F.A., came up and were offered the surrender of Jerusalem by the Mayor, the Chief of Police and others. The

Mayor suggested that immediate seizure of the post office was desirable, and Major Cooke and his orderly, and an Arab policeman rode to the post office, one and a half miles further on and outside the city walls.

He locked up the office and refused to accept the surrender of the city. No British troops joined him for over two hours, and in the meantime he sent back for support and senior officers. A little later Brigadier-General Watson, 180th Brigade, arrived and accepted the first informal surrender.

In the afternoon the surrender was formally received by Major-General Shea, G.O.C. 60th Division.

General Sir Edmund Allenby made his State entry into the Holy City on December 11th, and the old Jaffa gate was reopened for the purpose.

Thus came the English back to the city for which their ancestors had fought in centuries lost in time."

On December 13th we took up an advanced position at Shafat (or Nob, where David ate the shewbread), in the cold driving rain, with the guns nestling among great boulders. In this bleak spot, in action on high ground four miles north of Jerusalem, we remained till the 27th. The 53rd Division extended from Bethlehem to the Mount of Olives on our right, and the XXIst Corps on our left carried on the line up to the coast.

There was some very hard fighting with the Turk, who frequently counter-attacked, before we again shifted him off his strong position in these hills.

On December 28th we pursued the enemy, marching all night and fighting all through the next day, when our infantry stormed the important position of Ram Allah.

The artillery did good work that day, concentrating their fire on strong points and fairly hurling the enemy off his perch at Birch, the ancient Beeroth, where Joseph and Mary discovered the loss of Jesus. This position was taken with great determination by the 60th Division, who indeed in this campaign

had undoubtedly won their laurels and the admiration of all. In later days I heard a general style this Division "the Immortal 60th." Right up to May, 1918 (and probably after), the 60th bore the brunt of the fighting. Our infantry brigade and battalion commanders were always openly grateful to us, and told us they could do nothing without the guns. But the higher infantry commanders and G.H.Q. in Palestine had no love for their artillery, and we were continually made to realize this fact. To adapt Kipling :

It was "Gunner this, and Gunner
That, and Gunner go away."
But it's "thank you, Mr. Gunner"
When the Guns begin to play.

Sometimes we were very cold and wet these days, and this marching over mountainous country told terribly on the horses and mules. Probably the camels, unused to the cold winds and slimy tracks, suffered the most. Some thousands of camels died of exposure to the winter storms, and very many had to be destroyed as a result of broken legs.

I can see again the distressing sights in those bleak hills : dead camels by the side of the road ; deserted wagon lines where a horse, unable from starvation and sheer weakness to drag its gun out of the bog, lay dead, half buried in the mud ; the ghastly grin of a dead Turk, whose body lay across the track, which horrid mess the gun wheels of every gun failed to avoid, and the grinning head rocked backwards and forwards as the wheels again squashed over the lacerated corpse.

The following telegrams were forwarded for the information of all ranks :

From the Corps Commander to General Shea, 60th Division.

"It is a fitting reward for the splendid work of your gallant Division since the commencement of operations that the honour of receiving the surrender of Jerusalem should have fallen to them. My heartiest congratulations to you and them."

From General Shea to the Corps Commander.

“The whole Division is greatly honoured and touched by your most kind message. You can rely on us to go all out for you whenever you order.

A. C. TEMPERLEY,
Lieut.-Colonel,
General Staff.”

December 10th, 1917.

Christmas at Shafat had been a most unpleasant experience. There, high up amongst the rocks, we were entirely exposed to the bitter cold of a sleet-storm. All through the day and following night we stood in the driving rain and sleet: no bivvy could withstand the hurricane.

At eight o'clock that night we thought of roast turkey, plum pudding and a roaring fire as we sat shivering under a tarpaulin, soaked to the skin. The tarpaulin had a large rent across it, and it was a feat of no ordinary difficulty to prevent the bully beef and biscuits from being entirely submerged: and all the time the water trickled down our necks.

In addition to this, telephone messages kept coming in to say that the Turk was threatening to counter-attack, so it was not altogether a happy Christmas. Five of my men were taken to the field ambulance next morning so numbed with cold that they could not move, and were carried away.

On January 2nd, 1918, the artillery of the 53rd Division relieved our artillery at Bireh, and our guns were ordered to come into action on the Mount of Olives facing east. The defensive line at this time faced east and north. In the east from Bethlehem to Rummon, and in the north a line running from Bireh to Jaffa and the coast.

The question of suitable positions for the 18-pounder gun was not an easy one in this mountainous country, where big angles of descent had to be juggled with clearance of crest. The howitzers presented no such difficulties. The howitzers of both field and mountain brigades were the favourite weapons,

although, for occasional wire-cutting and rapid fire, barrage work and so on, the field-gun had its uses.

I was required to conduct the firing of one of the 53rd Division batteries in support of an attack north of Bireh, therefore I did not join my own battery on the Mount of Olives until two days later, when I found both men and horses snugly billeted in a convent—the horses in warm rooms on the ground floor. However, owing to bugs, which infested the building, literally crawling up the walls in regiments, we were obliged to vacate many of the rooms.

The disgusting state of the place was no doubt the result of Turkish soldiers having lately occupied the convent, or possibly of nuns; many of them, I imagine, from their appearance and habits, were most unsavoury.

A great sense of humour goes far in troublous times. My Sergeant-Major Barnes in gloomiest moments throughout the operations always somehow seemed to see the comic side of every tragedy. Curiously enough he was by profession an actor, chiefly taking parts in Shakespearian plays. I never wish for a better sergeant-major, and he was absolutely fearless. It takes all sorts to make a world—or nowadays an army—and one of the finest infantry charges I saw in Palestine was led by a dentist.

On January 9th I assumed temporary command of the 301st Field Artillery Brigade in the absence of Colonel Thatcher.

During this period I made several long reconnaissances for battery positions in the bleak hills. We had a successful raid on Mukhmas, a corner of the world, rugged, stony and barren in the extreme. A deep ravine with precipitous sides divided this village from the surrounding hills, the village itself being approached only by mountain paths.

It was at this uninviting spot that Jonathan and his armour-bearer attacked the Philistine garrison of Michmash.

On February 13th, 1918, I assumed command of the 303rd Field Artillery Brigade, the Brigade in which I had commanded a battery in the previous operations. My headquarters were

now in Jerusalem. The following days were spent with my battery commanders in long and careful reconnaissances. The country over which we were to operate was difficult, a sea of hills and deep ravines with the one road running through them for twenty-five miles to Jericho.

On February 19th operations commenced for securing the Jebel Kuruntul-Khurbah-Kukun-Rugh, Esh Shemaliyeh line. I commanded the centre group consisting of other artillery brigades in support of the 180th Infantry Brigade.

The batteries were so grouped that we were able to concentrate fire on the enemy's strong positions, and later on, by pushing guns forward, were able to assist the infantry on our right, whose artillery, owing to difficult country, had failed to come up. My battery commanders did splendid work and showed great energy and skill in the handling of their guns.

Early on the 20th I hurried up the Jericho road with a section of 18-pounders and a subaltern in charge. Finding a bridge on the Jericho road blown up, we unhooked the teams, and with the assistance of sixty men belonging to the 2/20th London Regiment (commanded by Ward Aldham of the Coldstream), dragged the guns bodily down into the wadi and up the other side, and hurried into action in time to render much-needed assistance to the infantry who were held up immediately south of the Talat ed Dumm Castle. In the meantime my howitzer battery D 303, commanded by Major Price, came to the rescue of the 2/19th Londons on the left. The remainder of my artillery searched the hills beyond. After an intense bombardment, lasting the best part of an hour and a half, our infantry stormed the next hill and took it.

The marching and fighting had called for considerable skill on the part of the infantry working over difficult ground, against naturally strong defensive positions, on which the Turks had dug themselves in.

Young Philpott and I rode forward to Talat ed Dumm. We climbed up the almost perpendicular bank which rose sheer up about 400 feet above the Jericho road. At the top two of

our machine-guns were firing, and there was a tremendous din and whirl of rushing men and screams of bullets. We ran across an open grass slope and knelt down behind the machine-guns. Here we could see the Turks on the rise about 300 yards beyond.

On this position Philpott brought his battery to bear, standing up for an hour observing, fully exposed to fire. He was obliged to stand owing to the difficulty of observation and communication. A fine officer, full of initiative and pluck.

That night, after this victorious day, we bivouacked on the Talat ed Dumm position, which we had captured.

It is on the Talat ed Dumm, or "Ascent of Blood" (called so from the colour of this rock), position that the Good Samaritan Inn building stands. The inn was a refuge in Biblical days from the "ravens," or thieves, who infested the valley below.

On February 21st we continued our advance towards Jericho. The 180th Infantry Brigade moved along the high peaks parallel to the main Jericho road. I ordered the main portion of my artillery to cover this advance, and, taking a section of guns with me, moved along the road abreast of the infantry.

In the meantime the Anzac Mounted Brigade had worked forward on our right, and by 8 a.m. had entered Jericho.

As there was now no opposition, I rode forward with my orderly down the steep track in places hewn out of the rocks. Suddenly, round the corner of the winding track, the plains of Jericho far below came into view, and the little village of Jericho half-way between these mountains and the Jordan river, its white minaret and collection of mud huts standing out against the vivid green beyond.

The intensely blue Dead Sea lay like a mirror to the south; and in the background the dark hills of Moab.

Across the open plains moved troop after troop of cavalry, all converging on Jericho, the bright sun flashing on swords and harness. Colonel Henry, an Australian, attached to Headquarters Staff, joined me, and we rode on towards Jericho.

When we got down to the plains we were about two miles ahead of our infantry, and here joined in with the cavalry, the enemy shelling us as we approached the village. We had breakfast by the viaduct which crosses the Wadi Kelt, and then rode into Jericho. By this time (9.45 a.m.) General Chater, commanding the Anzac mounted troops, rode up and asked me to give him some guns, as his artillery had failed to come up. So I at once sent back for a section of 18-pounders to operate with the Anzacs. The infantry had orders to remain in the hills overlooking Jericho, the cavalry remaining in touch with the enemy, who had withdrawn to the line of the River Jordan.

Although it was comparatively cool at this time, as many men and horses as possible were kept in the hills owing to the conditions of climate in the Jericho plain, with its unnatural depression of 1100 feet below sea-level. In the hot weather the Bedouins desert this low-lying country, which at all seasons of the year is depressing. However, later on we were to remain there many weeks in suffocating heat.

On February 22nd Colonel Henry and I motored down to the plain. On arriving at the foot of the hill we crossed the plain to the Dead Sea, a distance of six or seven miles. It is recorded that there is a strong indication in favour of locating Sodom and Gomorrah on this ground, as, according to the Biblical record, it was "full of slime pits." A more God-forsaken country it is difficult to conceive. As this reconnaissance to the north end of the Dead Sea was beyond the cavalry outpost line, our little Ford car bristled with weapons, but beyond occasional shots with rifles and revolvers at running partridges, which we failed to topple over, there was no rencontre, as we expected, with the Turk.

In the middle of the great plain stood a solitary square white monastery with a blue dome, Deir Hajleh. No other building existed in this solitude for miles. Two or three Greek monks lived there, patient, simple creatures, who would have cheerfully and hospitably received any passer-by were he Christian, Turk or Chinese.

A few weeks later this home of rest and prayer became the headquarters of an infantry brigade and a barracks for a battalion, so that its courts and galleries hummed with pleasant oaths from Whitechapel—a great change for the peaceful monks.

Eventually our little car, crawling through white slimy mud, reached the shingly beach of the Dead Sea. Here the scene was most desolate. Barkless strips of boughs and trunks lay about the shore; little waves lapped languidly upon the shingle, leaving a salt foam at the sea edge. Nothing but sterility on all sides except, lying back from the beach, an occasional thicket of willow, tamarisk and oleander. The Dead Sea water is intensely salt, and no animal life could exist in it. To bathe in it is unpleasant, as the salt causes every portion of the body to tingle and produces the Dead Sea rash.

During the following days we made several reconnaissances in the valley in view of future operations in this direction. In a letter I wrote home at this time, whilst in this part of the world, I described roughly scenes which impressed me.

“Riding back one night in the mountains after a long day in the plains I passed troops marching to battle. It was moonlight. A kilted regiment swung through the pass—just men silently tramping along. And as they emerged from the dark hill shadows, the moonlight flashed on their steel helmets. For a background huge steep stony ridges, and further away a steel-blue sheet of water marked the Dead Sea. The colouring was simply perfect. I just held my breath with the thrill of it. Glints of light glanced off scabbard and helmet and the shadowy forms of their skirts. Tiny spots of flame high up on the hills above represented a camp or bivouac: the white road led away into the gloom.”

HIGHLANDERS IN PALESTINE

Over the long, dark Moab Hills the white
And silent Moon climbs up till Jordan's plain
Lies clear below her, and she sees again
Long lines of soldiers marching out to fight.

Down the steep, narrow pass as those of old
These tramp with measured stride and flash of steel,
Grim, ruthless envoys of the Last Appeal—
No change in Man the changeless Hills behold.

Steel-blue the Dead Sea in the brilliant light,
A white road stretches to the purple gloom
Where countless hosts have vanished to their doom
In all the glory of the Eastern night.

Sparkles on helm, and knee-short skirts that swing—
Hast Time gone back? Are these the men of Rome?
Does Alexander pass in triumph home?
Or kilted Israelites with spear and sling?

Over and on they march, across the gleam
Into the shadow-land, while far and still
The white Moon touches river, plain and hill
With all the magic of her age-long dream.

E. R. DAUNCEY.

Again another memory of the Judean hills. "Bright sunlight, women and children dressed in sacking or sometimes in brilliant colours: many Russian Jewish women, some quite old, all working—road mending. Wonderfully picturesque groups. Little baskets of stones on their heads: carrying or heaping stones alongside the dusty road. Men out of Bible pictures watching: Arabs in long flowing robes of white, some blue, some red: groaning camels, little donkeys carrying absurd weights. Here and there tall Sikhs mustering the working women and children, so poorly clad, the last, that one could scarcely call them clothes.

Round the bend of the long, endless road came a big car flying the Union Jack, an armoured car preceding this one as a guard to the Commander-in-Chief. Two or three more cars carrying the gilded staff followed the chiefs. The big Indian Sikh soldier came up to attention, saluted, and the cars passed on."

Next day I took a party of my own officers on reconnaissance. The following describes the day's work. A group of horsemen

riding over a great plain—green grass in the low-lying wadi with pretty English wild flowers growing alongside the clear-running stream. A shell bursts overhead. A second falls with a crash not very near, but near enough: horsemen move forward up the wadi in separate groups, then meet again. The horses are watered and left behind; the party of dismounted officers walk forward not knowing what is ahead. There is no escort, and they are nearing the River Jordan. The wadi here breaks up into little hillocks. They strike a track and notice marks of enemy: still they go on. An iron bridge comes into view round the corner of a mound. Out come maps and field-glasses. Then “ping,” a bullet screams overhead. They go up on to the next rise and look over and make sure of their bearings. They are beyond any other British troops, within perhaps five hundred or six hundred yards of the Turk. They see the Turk just above the wadi. Quick calculations are made, roads or tracks—the bend of the river and other vital things to them are noted.

Crash goes another shell, this time too close to be pleasant, followed by three or four, one bursting immediately overhead, knocking up lumps of the dry mud. They walk up, find shelter in a little grass cove, fish out some food, sitting on the grass, all very hungry—cheese and biscuits and pieces of chocolate, whisky and water and cigarettes. Reconnaissance not yet over.

They must make quite sure on some points. Another walk forward. Everyone at last satisfied: they have been seen and three or four shells burst round the little party. They get back to their horses, divide up in pairs, emerge from the river-bed, and ride at full gallop across the open plain and make for the long home journey back into the hills.

Several days were spent in this way in reconnoitring for artillery positions and in reconnaissance of the River Jordan between February 28th and March 6th.

On March 2nd, in order to cover the reconnaissance of the River Jordan by the infantry, I distributed sections of artillery on a broad front on the right bank of the river, and a 60-pounder

battery also came under my orders. In addition I used two Turkish captured 75 mm. guns, besides part of my own brigade, to worry the enemy's artillery, which had shown some activity during the reconnaissances of fords and the bridging of the Jordan.

I took the opportunity at this time to make personal reconnaissances with the cavalry.

By the 17th I had assembled my brigade in the plain, a large artillery camp was formed, including the divisional ammunition column of the 60th and 53rd Divisions, and I became commandant of this camp.

The camp lay in the valley at the foot of Jebel Kuruntul, the Hill of Temptation, a precipitous rock rising sheer up from the plain, overhanging a deep wadi. There were caves high up, and a monastery clung to the face of these rocks. A weird spot this, the traditional scene of our Lord's forty days' Fasting and Temptation.

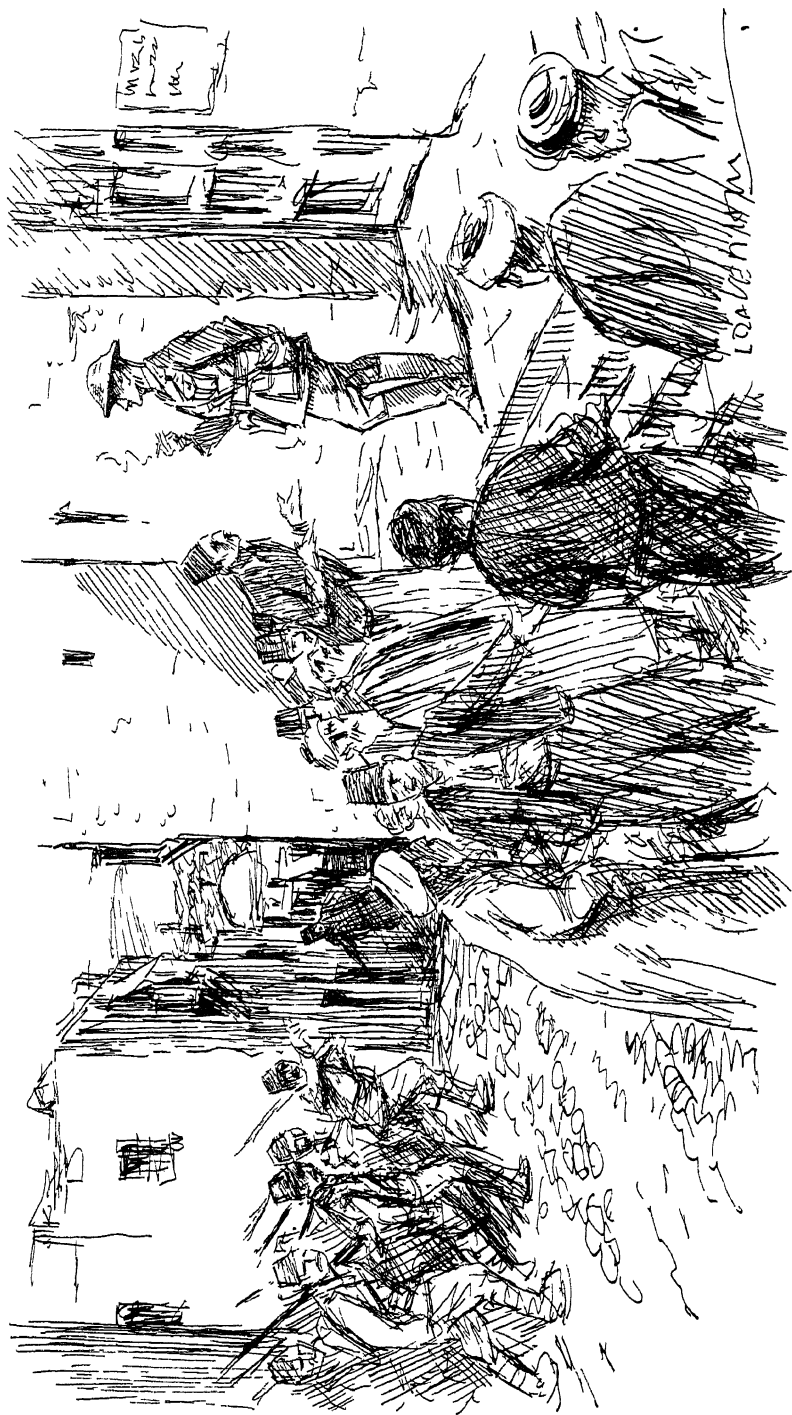
On the 20th three enemy planes flew low over this camp, in which I had many hundreds of horses and mules, dropped bombs and fired at us with machine-guns. Total casualties, one mule shot through the buttock.

On the 21st my group of artillery consisted of a howitzer battery of the 302nd Brigade, a battery of 60-pounders, two mountain batteries and my own 303rd Brigade.

The crossing of the Jordan was made at the Market el Hajleh ford by the 180th Infantry Brigade under great difficulties and with much opposition in the early hours of the morning of the 21st. Market el Hajleh was the scene of the baptism of Christ.

The river here was about 100 feet in breadth—swift running, which added to the difficulties of erecting a pontoon bridge under heavy fire, so that the infantry suffered heavy casualties.

On the 22nd three of my batteries were obliged to shift positions under heavy shell-fire. This was very well carried out, the shells falling amongst the teams as they drove up out of the wadi. Great coolness was shown amongst the drivers, so that only three men were wounded.



THEN SUDDENLY ROUND THE CORNER APPEARED ABOUT FIFTY TURKISH SOLDIERS
(Sketch by L. Raven Hill)



A CROWD OF NATIVES FOLLOWED US UP THE LITTLE STREET OF LA SALT

On the morning of the 23rd I crossed the Jordan with a party of officers to reconnoitre for gun positions, and sent two mountain batteries across to support the 2/17th Londons, who held the high bank on the east of the river. By the night of the 23rd I had crossed batteries of artillery at Market el Hajleh and at Ghoranyieh. These two points were five miles apart.

Early on the morning of the 24th we received orders to advance in support of the 181st Infantry Brigade, with which we were now operating, the 179th Brigade co-operating on our left.

By 7 a.m. I had concentrated all my artillery at Ghoranyieh in preparation for this advance across the plain to the Moab hills beyond. The passage of the Jordan having been completed, the objective now was the Hedjaz railway, a strategical line running down the whole length of Palestine from Damascus to Maan and thence to Medina. At Amman the line approached the Jordan to within twenty-five miles, and here the Turks had constructed formidable defences covering the approaches to the railway station. There was a strong Turkish garrison at Maan and another at Medina. It was important to gain possession of Amman and isolate Maan and Medina from Damascus.

The Arab irregulars belonging to the army of the king of the Hedjaz, who were co-operating with us, were divided into two mobile forces—a southern force commanded by Sherif Abdulla, and a northern force under Sherif Feisal, the king's sons. Although these Arabs had on several occasions broken into the outer defences of Maan, the line was still open to Amman, where there was a large munition depot.

We were now to cross about six miles of open plain, which, commanded as it was by the hills on the east side of the valley, afforded no cover for artillery. The high ground, Tel el Mustal Haud, which protected the entrance to the mountains, formed our objective. I ordered two howitzer batteries and two mountain batteries to advance up the Wadi Nimrin, and sent

the remaining guns forward to positions of readiness, prepared to advance swiftly over the open grass plain.

Major Price, R.F.A., and Major Barry, R.F.A., both commanding howitzer batteries, did excellent work, each leading a section of guns right forward under heavy fire. Major Price fell severely wounded, and Barry, although wounded in the shoulder, carried on, refusing to leave his guns. Our infantry stormed the heights of El Haud, covered by the fire of these batteries, and forced the Turks from this strong position.

Major Price, whom I recommended very strongly for exceptional services in the operations east of Jerusalem, was awarded the Military Cross. He had commanded a battery for over two years—an exceptional gunner and a brave Territorial officer.

That night we entered the pass which led for eighteen miles through the mountains of Moab, and bivouacked a mile up the road towards our next objective, Es Salt.

At dawn on the 25th I took two mountain batteries in close support of the infantry up the pass, my two howitzer batteries following with eight-horsed teams. The 18-pounder batteries were not to enter the mountains, as it was not considered that they would be required owing to the flat trajectory of these guns.

Es Salt is situated about twenty-five miles from Ghoranyieh ford over Jordan, at a height of 4000 feet above the plain, which we had now left behind. A drizzling rain helped to increase the burden of our long uphill march. At 2 p.m., when within a few miles of our objective, the infantry, who had worked along the heights on either side of the road, were held up. One of the mountain batteries took exactly four minutes to get into action and commence shelling. I have never seen quicker work than that done by these two mule batteries, the 10th and 16th, in these operations. Under cover of the mountain batteries, the infantry again advanced, the long column crawling slowly up the road.

Owing to the Wadi Sha'ib, through which deep gorge the mountain stream flowed, and to the precipitous cliffs on each

side, it was not possible for the cavalry patrols to leave the road, so that they were entirely at the mercy of possible snipers on the hill-tops, which commanded the Es Salt approach. By five o'clock that evening the head of the column came again into collision with the enemy, and the Anzac mounted patrols, owing to casualties to horses, could not push on.

The Brigadier-General requested two infantry officers to go up the road and reconnoitre on foot. I dismounted and accompanied these officers. We had not gone a hundred yards before we espied a group of about twelve riflemen high up in the rocks above the road. And as we looked they raised their rifles. We all leapt to the side of the road, the air singing with bullets. This was enough, and we sneaked back. Almost immediately there was another volley right into the little party, followed by the scream of a shell from a mountain-gun. I mounted my horse, which was in front of the column, galloped back, and tumbled one of the mountain batteries into action, ordering up the remainder of my artillery into action to register the hills guarding Es Salt.

Soon it became dark, and we bivouacked by the side of the road for the night. In the meantime the Desert Mounted Corps had moved up the mountains on our right towards Amman, and on our left the 179th Infantry Brigade had ascended from the valley by a narrow and precipitous path.

Before daylight on March 25th advance troops of the 179th Brigade had entered Es Salt (reported to be the ancient Ramoth-Gilead). I rode into the town with Brigadier-General Da Costa and our orderlies, and as we approached a crowd of natives followed us up the little street, firing guns and pistols close to our horses' heads as a *feu de joie*. I was not sure whether I enjoyed this or not, for a more desperate-looking party of Circassian buccaneers I had never so far encountered. However, we were met with friendly glances and all seemed well.

Later in the day the Divisional General, General Shea, commanding the 60th Division, arrived, and a formal entry was arranged. He rode one of my horses. General Robinson,

commanding the artillery of the Division, also joined the procession, and rode with me. Robinson was a sound, cheery fellow, well liked by all ranks : a man to work for and to do one's best for, quiet, brave and unassuming, with the good manners which are second nature to an old Etonian.

While the operations at Es Salt had so far been successful, the Mounted Corps on its approach to Amman had encountered the enemy in great strength. The strong position there bristled with machine-guns and light artillery, and it was therefore decided to send on at once the 181st Infantry Brigade under Da Costa to the assistance of the Camel Corps.

On March 27th I was ordered to maintain my two howitzer batteries for the defence of Es Salt and despatch three mounted batteries (I had been reinforced by a third) to Amman, a distance of sixteen miles through the village of Siweili and El Fuheis.

In the meantime I sent out two officers' patrols towards Amman to reconnoitre the road leading thereto. Very excellent reports were brought in, stating amongst other details that the road was impossible for howitzers, but possible for 18-pounder batteries.

On the 28th enemy planes flew over the artillery camps, dropping bombs and killing Major Beck and Lieutenant Scott and desperately wounding Captain Weston.

General Humphreys, who had now assumed command of the defence of Es Salt, rode out with me and two battery commanders. We followed the steep track leading north-north-west from Es Salt and reached the high ground Neby Osh'a, another thousand feet up. Here we found the Anzac mounted patrols. The view from this high position is one of the most extensive and magnificent in the whole of Syria. The whole course of the Jordan, hundreds of feet below, from the Dead Sea to the Sea of Galilee, could be clearly traced, its silvery waters gleaming in the sun. We could see the entire range of the West Palestine hills, from Hebron in the south to Upper Galilee in the north. And we could see enemy cavalry moving in the plain and two large Turkish camps below us.

Originally the operations were intended to be in the form of a raid by the Mounted Corps to cut the Amman-Damascus railway, which was to have been completed in two days. The Mounted Corps, however, failed to destroy the tunnel over the railway, so that infantry and artillery were sent to assist them in their withdrawal, and we were delayed longer in these mountains than it was ever intended.

The following days were a period of considerable anxiety. Our force in front of Es Salt was a very weak one, consisting of two depleted battalions, about five hundred rifles in all, and two batteries of 4.5-inch howitzers. It was a large perimeter, that could only be held by picketing hills and approaches to north-east, north and east of the town, with cavalry outposts watching our left flank.

We received vague rumours from natives throughout this time of enemy forces massing and Turkish cavalry marching in large numbers on Es Salt.

We were in great suspense for five days, as we knew that we must hang on to this place to cover the withdrawal of the Amman force. In the meantime our right flank was very exposed, and there was fear of being cut off from the 181st Brigade and of having our long line of communication severed, situated as we were up there in the enemy country, and this must have happened had the Turks not missed their way in the mountains.

However, with great difficulties, we hung on until March 31st. Two attempts on the 30th to rush our outpost line were frustrated. General Humphreys had strolled over to my bivvy, where my Adjutant, Thompson, and I had made a fire out there in the open with the rain pouring down. It was bitterly cold. Every moment we expected an attack. Humphreys said: "If they attack us we're in the soup." Thompson came up to me afterwards and asked if the little General was anxious as regards our position. I said: "No, not anxious, but just now he is preoccupied; I know he is preoccupied because he drank up my glass of whisky by mistake." Thompson was one of the

best fellows possible—capable, always cheerful and brimming over with dry humour ; full of tact in his capacity of Adjutant ; an ideal Staff Officer.

When it became dark we were able gradually to withdraw from the hills—a ticklish business. The evacuation of wounded, who had to be brought down the steep slopes on camels, was well carried out. As I rode down the hill that night, the one mountain road was choked with camels carrying wounded and with parties of straggling refugees, for the Christians of Es Salt took this opportunity to hurry out of the place.

Women, children, old men and donkeys piled up with furniture blocked up the way. Many were overtaken next day in their weary march down hill and killed by Turkish cavalry.

That night we reached the plain again and prepared to cover the withdrawal of the infantry to the line of the River Jordan, which was successfully accomplished soon after dark, all my artillery having to cross the river by one pontoon bridge.

The following message was received from the Corps Commander a few days later :

“ The G.O.C. wishes to thank all ranks for the very able manner in which recent operations have been carried out, and for the gallantry and endurance displayed under most adverse conditions. He has been asked by the Corps Commander to convey his sincere thanks and admiration to the Division. The marked efficiency and cheerful contempt of all difficulties displayed by the R.E. and by the administrative services contributed in no small degree to the success of the operations.

The G.O.C. congratulates the whole Division on yet another splendid performance.

H. McCall,
A.A. and Q.M.G. 60th Div.”

The Anzacs, to whom we were at times attached, were cheery fellows and most independent. Individually they were magni-

ficient specimens of manhood. Off duty, many of them, in spite of the fierce sun, wore only “ shorts,” and rode about stripped of their shirts. One day General Allenby, who had issued an order prohibiting the wearing of “ shorts ” when mounted, drove down to the Jordan and saw a great hulking Anzac trooper stripped to the waist and in “ shorts ” riding his horse to water. At the Chief’s order the trooper was promptly stopped by one of his own officers, a little perky fellow, no doubt an important frog in his own little puddle. He was roundly told off, with the Commander-in-Chief in his car near by, for having “ shorts ” on when mounted. The big Anzac, however, was completely unmoved by his “ telling-off,” and stripping his only garment before the astonished officers, politely handed his “ shorts ” to the little officer, saying : “ Very well then, take the bloody things.” Then, naked as he was born, except for a pair of shoes, he leapt on to his horse and rode on. I happened to witness this performance and was much tickled.

It was in the first evening of my new command of the 302nd Brigade, I was riding at the head of a group of officers crossing over the River Jordan bent on an important reconnaissance of ground over which we were to fight on the morrow ; riding out beyond our outposts to survey the country for gun positions, etc. General Allenby spotted this cavalcade (my battery commanders and myself) crossing over the bridge, his eye alighted on *me* at the head of the party. I was actually wearing “ shorts ” as the order prohibiting them had not reached me in my new command.

I heard a roar from the car and realized that the C.I.C. was addressing me. I dismounted and approached the Union Jacked car. My deep thoughts were engrossed in the task I had set myself, that of studying the country beyond Jordan over which I was to manœuvre my brigade next day. This was, indeed, a sad interruption, and in a trance I listened for five minutes to General Allenby whose language reminded me of our old friend Sir Charles Tucker.

I cannot remember all the words, but as I left I realized that

I was in disgrace, the last sentence being : " You shall hear of this again."

I stood ruminating : " Shall I, also, hand over my little shorts ? " But, out of respect for the C.I.C. Palestine, decided not to. In addition I felt that, minus my shorts, my shirt tails would flap in the Palestine breeze and my officers would not approve. I saluted, mounted my charger and went on with the reconnaissance . . . in shorts.

On April 3rd I was given command of the 302nd Brigade R.F.A., which was in position in the plain to cover the bridge-head at Ghoranyieh.

On the night of April 17th/18th I recrossed the Jordan in command of the artillery to support a reconnaissance by the Anzac Mounted Division on Shunet Nimrin, in co-operation with the 18th Brigade R.H.A. 60-pounders and the 383rd Siege Battery 6-inch guns. This was satisfactorily carried out, and we withdrew to the right bank of the river on the night of the 19th/20th.

It had now become very hot, and the flies were a plague. Dead camels lay unburied in the plain, the result of hostile air-bombing, when sixty or seventy camels would be killed at a time.

The bridge-head at Ghoranyieh was put in a state of defence and was strongly held by us on the east bank. The Turks made several attacks in this direction, and finally on April 29th it was resolved, for political reasons, to again attack the enemy at Shunet Nimrin and once more send a force up into the mountains to the east of the River Jordan.

Therefore, for the third time, I concentrated my artillery on the left bank of the river preparatory to an attack on the Makkar-Durbasi-Shunet Nimrin-Bilibeil position, in support of the 180th Infantry Brigade, which was now very much depleted in numbers and worn out with constant marching and many months' fighting. The 179th would again co-operate on our left. I had under my orders, in addition to my own brigade, a battery of horse artillery and a 3.7 mountain howitzer. A feature

of these operations was the exceptional work done by the forward artillery officers under very difficult circumstances. It was as much as the infantry could do to hold the enemy to his position, and had it not been for the skill of the battery commanders, in conjunction with their forward officers, this operation, undertaken by tired-out officers and men, might have ended seriously.

At one point an infantry company gave ground, and young Bridgeman (Lord Bridgeman's youngest son), an artillery officer who had been shelled and shot at for the best part of two days, was nearly surrounded by the Turks, isolated as he was with one signaller right up in a front-line sangar. Nevertheless he crawled back down the steep hill, rallied forty men, and with shouts of "Follow the artillery," himself leading, recaptured and held the lost trenches. Geoffrey Bridgeman had already been awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous bravery at the taking of Jerusalem, when he brought a wounded comrade in under close fire, afterwards riding back and leading his section of guns right forward in the teeth of the fight. Good work for a boy of nineteen. Geoffrey Bridgeman acted as my Staff Officer.

All through these operations we were given the very greatest help and consideration by the aforementioned General Robinson, C.R.A., 60th Division, and his staff. Imbert Terry, the General's Staff Officer, worked admirably. Terry was continually dealing with officers of infantry, some of them showing almost complete ignorance of artillery questions. Nevertheless he used a firm hand with all the tactful manner with which he was so well provided.

The 180th Infantry Brigade had gallantly carried out all required of them up to date, but they were obliged to recross the river, after fighting a superior force for five days on end. During this time all my batteries were registered and shelled by hostile guns. We had bombarded the enemy position constantly during this period, but our infantry were not strong enough to storm the heights, protected as they were by innumerable

machine-guns, and manned by a considerable force. So for the time being, until fresh troops could be sent, we were to be content with holding the river line. On the night of April 30th and May 1st we again found ourselves in action on the banks of the Jordan.

On May 15th I fell sick as the result of the climate in the river-bed and was given a week's leave to Alexandria. There I sustained an accident, and was given three weeks' leave to England, and eventually found myself back in France in command of a brigade in the 46th Division.

In Palestine I had great admiration for the battery commanders who served under me. No difficulty was too great for them, and at times the operations, owing to climate, difficulties of transport, difficulties of road, etc., called for considerable skill and ability on the part of all my officers and men, who never failed to help me with their courage and, above all, their cheerfulness.

CHAPTER XX

FRANCE, 1918

DESOLATION—CAPTAIN MONCK, COLDSTREAM GUARDS—FIFTY-ONE MONTHS' FIGHTING OVER



IN December 5th, 1918, I once more landed in France, and after waiting at various towns, Le Havre, Rouen, Amiens and Cambrai, I arrived at Landrecies, the home of the 46th Division which belonged to the 13th Corps 3rd Army, after ten days' journeying to my destination. Here, no one expected me, this was not new to me, no one ever expects you in the Army.

The latter part of my journey to northern France was spent in a motor lorry. Besides myself there were in this lorry two subalterns of artillery now returning to their stations, and in a far corner a young French *émigré* and his pale wife were returning to their shattered home in a village which was now scarcely recognizable. A third of the car was taken up by two enormous live pigs, the property of the two subalterns. The two animals were barricaded off from us and our luggage by a wooden rail. The jolting of the car over shell-holed and *pavé* roads was too much for the pigs, and having tried every attitude to essay comfort, they at last lay prostrate on the floor of this active lorry and were violently sick for mile after mile.

We passed through Albert, which I had known in the early Somme Battle days when the little town was busy with life and full of soldiers and bravely cheerful French women. It was now a city of the dead. The tragedy of gazing upon a town utterly and absolutely squashed and obliterated out of all recognition was all the more poignant to me having last seen it in 1916.

No house and scarcely one wall of a house in the whole town of Albert stood up.

For nearly twenty miles after passing Albert we travelled through country which on paper cannot be described for its dreary awfulness. Villages which I had known were wiped off God's earth. There was positively nothing to mark where buildings and life had been. Miles and miles of open, bleak, shell-pocked land where nothing but death and the foul fearfulness of war had swept it bare.

Here and there a derelict tank stood stark and gaunt in the drizzling landscape. I passed again my old dug-out and gun-pits ; I saw again the spot where I had held one of my officers in his last death struggle out there in the mud.

Then the well-known landmarks around Contalmaison, and beyond Bapaume which in those days the Boche held. Mile after mile of hell. Such was the devastated area between Albert and Cambrai.

Landrecies we arrived at, at long last, where in 1914 the German force of two armies, each consisting of six corps, opposed our British force of four infantry divisions and a cavalry division.

Landrecies reminds me a little, as regards size, of the small country town of Lymington in Hampshire, with its one long sloping street of old houses and shops.

On the night of August 25th, 1914, the second day of the retreat from Mons, the 4th Guards Brigade (Second Division) were at Landrecies. The 3rd Coldstream Guards occupied the town. Early next morning a German infantry column, about a brigade in strength, emerged from the wood just north of the town and advanced south in close order up the main street.

The alarm was given by Captain Monck's company, 3rd Coldstream Guards ; two or three machine-guns were brought to bear on this magnificent target from the north end of Landrecies ; the head of the enemy column almost filling up the street, halted. Frightful panic ensued.

It is estimated that in a few minutes no less than eight hundred

to nine hundred Germans were lying in the street. No. 9 Battery R.F.A. supported the Coldstream in their destruction of this closely packed formation. Only two companies of the Coldstream were actually engaged, and their losses were two officers killed and two wounded, 170 other ranks killed and wounded.

At 9 a.m. on that day the 1st Division arrived and relieved the Guards Brigade.

The retreat was resumed at 1 p.m.

Twelve of our fellows were taken prisoner here, at Landrecies, but escaped and were hidden away in the little town by the French. Some were disguised as women, but were betrayed by the French Chief of Police of Landrecies, who was a traitor. Later this man was caught by the British and imprisoned at Le Cateau, where he hanged himself.

On arrival at Landrecies I found myself in command of the 230th Brigade R.F.A. I was shown my quarters, an unhealthy, dirty, damp house in which my predecessor had died of flu and another officer had been taken away dangerously ill. I chose a clean bright little château half a mile away for my headquarters. Later my brigade moved to a village near Solesme, where I became C.R.A. of the 46th Division for the time being, under Wellesley, the Corps C.R.A.

Here I not only commanded the divisional artillery but controlled the village also, where, with the help of the very charming mayor, I was able to relieve to a certain extent the suffering of the war-impooverished people, now reduced to abject poverty.

I remember entering one little cottage where, in the cold, brick-floored room two old peasants sat opposite each other. They were very old; the cottage was spotlessly clean, cared for by a granddaughter in her teens who came in each day to tend the grandparents. The old pair, man and wife, with dear wrinkled faces, ashy grey with cold, just sat there waiting . . . waiting, facing each other in their high-backed chairs.

At the time I entered this scene of forlorn tragedy, so tragic in its utter loneliness, of so little interest to anyone except the old couple (and almost beyond interest to them), there was no

food in the house and, although freezing outside, no fuel for the fire. She was too old to move far from her chair; he, unable to move for want of shoe leather, and too tender of foot after scrambling in the refuse heaps in search of food.

So there they sat . . . waiting.

A sack of coal which my orderly brought each week relieved a little the situation; and the good Mayor realizing the tragedy saw to it that these poor people did not starve.

Little by little my non-commissioned officers and men who had been billeted throughout the village, and whose behaviour towards the inhabitants was admirable, dribbled back to England as employment was assured them; for the fifty-one months of fighting were over.

Eventually I also left this poor war-scarred land of France.

The aftermath of a war such as this transcends everything in its horrors, its waste, its destruction, leaving us when the last shot has been fired, whoever the victor, high and dry on the desolate beach, gasping.

England, drained of her manhood and nearly bankrupt, had now to face problems hitherto unimagined in all her past history.

Even the Secretary, Widows' Pensions, sitting at his desk in London, perused his correspondence with troubled brow. Some answers to his enquiries from the merry widows of our gallant soldiers read as follows:

"I have no children as my husband is a vegetarian."

"I have received no pay since my husband was confined to a Constipation Camp in Germany."

"In answer to your question my child was not born in wedlock but in Brighton."

"If you don't send my pension soon I shall have to go on the streets and lead an immortal life."

And again: "My husband in the A.S.C. *which* exercising some horses was kicked in the padlock."

These are not the least of England's problems . . . no wonder his brow was wrinkled.

CHAPTER XXI

GERMANY, 1920

INTER-ALLIED COMMISSION OF CONTROL—DRESDEN AND MUNICH—LORD
KILMARNOCK—BAVARIA IN 1920—THE PRUSSIAN PROBLEM—THE HERR
DOKTOR

Though the heel of the strong oppressor
May grind the weak in the dust,
And the voices of fame, with one acclaim
May call him great and just;
Let those who applaud take warning
And keep this motto in sight,
No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right.

E. W. WILCOX.



AFTER the signing of the Armistice I was sent to Germany as a member of the Inter-Allied Commission of Control.

I visited the British, French and American centres of occupation. My duties took me to Dresden and Munich, which towns in turn became my headquarters for some months, and to Berlin very frequently for interviews and conferences.

My work carried me all over Bavaria and Saxony; my play-time to Vienna, Buda-Pesth and Czecho-Slovakia.

Up to date, except for occasional interviews with German prisoners in the War, my experience of the Teuton had been confined to a series of German governesses in my early boyhood, who in succession were named the Yellow Dwarf, the Gnat, and Cross-eyed Susan, and came under the heading of "nasty."

They were not popular with my brother and myself when at the ages of seven and four respectively, and were returned early to their native land.

So that it was a pleasant surprise to find that the German in his own country had many good points.

The self-discipline and love of Fatherland were curiously consistent throughout this federal country.

Prussians must, however, be excluded from the above remarks ; a Prussian is in a category of his own which is as a rule unspeakable, and, although their arrogance had naturally taken root here and there outside the confines of Prussia, I cannot say that I met with any incivility all the period of eleven months in Germany.

The British were perhaps not altogether well represented by the officers selected to serve on the Inter-Allied Military Commission.

A few, on the other hand, spread their good influence.

One or two of the senior officers were distinctly unpopular, which did not add to the success of the mission.

France had sent some of her best officers to carry out the important work which required extreme tact, intelligence and knowledge of the German language, and these gifts the French, almost without exception, were blessed with.

In the year I was in Germany I covered many hundreds of miles of country by rail and car, and came into contact with men of every class and variety. My duties carried me to numberless military centres, where I interviewed officers of every rank, Russian prisoners of war, camps, etc., etc., myself dressed in British uniform, bearding general officers, often of the highest rank, in their "holy of holies," to be met invariably with courtesy.

That is a wonderful thing to say. After four and a half years of bitter warring with a crafty, bloodthirsty opponent, still in his own mind unconquered, I found myself treated with deference and desire of friendship.

On the "Fourth" of June, 1920, Lord Kilmarnock, who became *Chargé d'Affaires* on resumption of diplomatic relations with Germany, entertained us with an Old Etonian dinner at the Embassy in Berlin, at which about fifteen were present.

Later in the evening we adjourned to the very lovely ball-room for which the British Embassy is famous, where full-length portraits of our Sovereigns, past and present, adorn the walls, each picture reaching from floor to ceiling, and including Queen Victoria as a young woman, King Edward VII, Queen Alexandra, looking very lovely, and our present Gracious Majesties, all of which hung there unscathed through the hostile years of war.

The ball-room was crowded with diplomats, soldiers and sailors of very many countries.

Later on in Munich a brother officer and I gave a reception and dance, at which were present members of the different Consulates in that town, officers of the Inter-Allied Commission, Italian, French, British and Belgian, with their wives.

There were a few Germans present of both sexes well known in that city. An egg-and-spoon race, in which at least eight or ten different nationalities competed, afforded great merriment. I think the Czecho-Slovak Consul and a very beautiful Italian lady won the prizes.

The manager of the Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten, which was the select hotel in Munich, spread himself on this occasion, giving us of his best as regards food and drink and placing his large reception rooms at our disposal. He was generous to a degree, more especially so, since only a few days before, we, on the Control Commission, were obliged to confine ourselves to the hotel for two days owing to the reported ill feeling in Munich towards the Commission. The Inter-Allied Commission had ordered the disbandment of the Einwohnerwehr and the German authorities were doing their utmost to turn us out of their country.

Dr. O—— was one of the guests at this reception. The Herr Doktor had been a Professor at the University of Heidelberg. Jonathan Bell, my friend and confrère on the Commission (employed in the armaments), and I, when not on duty, were always accompanied by Dr. O—— on all our excursions around Munich.

In all our pursuits in search of the history of Bavaria, in all

our walks or when purchasing some antique or some lovely work of art, the Herr Doktor was always at our side. He was about sixty-five years old, with pleasant features and mild blue-grey eyes. A most lovable man, full of great intelligence. He never smiled, but his eye sparkled over the many stories we told him, all of which he easily capped. His experience of life was a wide one; he was a student of human nature; and this added to his natural courtesy and great dignity gave him that charm of personality which we were quick to recognize and to thoroughly appreciate. We loved old O——.

At this reception given by Jonathan Bell and myself, the forlorn and rather pathetic figure of our Herr Doktor stood solitary in the middle of the ball-room surrounded by this distinguished assembly of diplomats and their wives. He was dressed in a long, loose, ill-fitting black frock coat, his black tie under a turned-down collar, and the dickey which hung down in front helped to conceal his flannel underclothing. His hair carefully brushed veiled his wide forehead. The benign features of our professor, rigged out in sombre garments, reminded one of a Scottish minister of the "Wee Free."

His calm grey eye, as he stood in this entourage, moved slowly round the room. Not his world this.

Seeing the benevolent old gentleman standing at that moment alone, one of the fashionable and somewhat gushing lady guests sailed up to Doktor O—— and addressed him in a kind but haughty voice: "Ah, Professor, I see you are alone. Are you married?" Doktor O—— answered in his precise and distinct voice which all heard: "Not exactly, Fräulein, I have lived with four ladies, and have been faithful to all of them."

After which information he bowed in his gracious manner, gazed rather sorrowfully at the lady . . . and passed on.

One day, years later, Jonathan Bell, in Berlin, saw an old figure in the street which seemed familiar to him. He recognized in the sad, patient eyes of the old man before him those of our old professor. The Herr Doktor was delighted to meet Jonathan again. He looked frail . . . at the end of his tether.

He spoke to his young English friend with quiet dignity ; his voice was faint with exhaustion : " I have had no food for four days."

Bell was able to assist him . . . gladly and generously.

The following gives some idea of the pulse and general feeling which existed in Bavaria in the summer of 1920.

Germany appeared to be recovering quickly. In Bavaria one felt convinced that the effects of war were wearing off. Not only the *nouveau riche*, but also the wage-earning middle and working-classes had the means to enjoy good holidays. There was no scarcity of food and no want of money. Also in the towns life was becoming comfortable again and returning to its normal state.

The political quarrels in Germany did not appear as serious as they were represented in the newspapers. According to party Press civil war was always imminent, and some foreign, especially French and Swiss, newspaper correspondents satisfied the curiosity of their readers by telling them what changes would soon come in Bavaria. As a matter of fact the average Bavarian had much less interest in such things than in the more important questions of housing, clothing, cheaper food, and stronger beer.

It is true that Germany was still divided into two parties. The Bolsheviks and their opponents were still keeping their hidden guns in readiness for a decisive battle.

No authority in Germany was strong enough or, even at heart, willing enough to see disarmament fully carried out, but it was not at all likely that anything more serious could happen than local disturbances.

People were calming down, political plotters and schemers were getting disillusioned, both parties were now in a more defensive position ; the law-abiding citizens would never give up their guns as long as the Communists were concealing theirs, and were prepared to use them. The Communists, on the other hand, believed that they must keep fully armed otherwise reaction full and simple would win . . . with the assistance of the allied countries.

The Allied Commission in Munich was not disliked. Doctor Simons was reported to have said that he had no wish that the Commission should leave the country. Its officers, he said, were broadminded and lenient in their views, and the result was satisfactory in consequence.

Bavarians as a rule were outwardly civil towards the British, but there was naturally no warmth of feeling towards the nation. On the other hand the Americans were welcomed everywhere with open arms. This was particularly noticeable in the country away from the cities where the true attitude of the Yankee during the war was little known. That the American hung back from the fight so long as he was required to provide ammunition to both sides, was not of interest to the Bavarian. Nor was it of interest to the Bavarian that this clever nation jumped into the last act of the war for commercial purposes only. It was enough that he was then feeding the starving children of Germany and was loved accordingly.

This as regards the attitude towards the Americans was in the actual words of a German who discussed the subject with me.

Americans were admired, English were respected. It was hard to say which of the two was most hated during the war. The American's neutrality was considered unfair and false; it made no great difference in the peoples' feelings when America declared war.

The most hated man was always President Wilson. Every utterance against this creature was eagerly watched here, and some of the Germans wished him to share the fate of Abraham Lincoln. Wilson was not much talked about then, but he was still looked upon as the man who led Germany to the false belief that his Fourteen Points would form the basis of what the German people call "A Peace of Understanding." There were special reasons to wish for good trade relations with America, this country being the principal purveyor of necessities of life, whereas England supplied chiefly luxuries. At that time, Scottish tweed and English Cheshire cheese were to be bought in Bavaria.

In Bavaria the animosity against England during the war was never so deep rooted as in the North. English artists, for instance, during and after the war, were welcome here.

Bavarians gazed on England and her ministers in surprise. Her mismanagement of Ireland was only, they said, an echo of her own internal mismanagement.

It was inconceivable to them that this country, whose Sovereign ruled nearly a quarter of the world, and whose coloured subjects alone numbered 360,000,000, could degrade herself in the eyes of the whole world by allowing herself to be crippled by strikes of every description.

They recognized the folly of a government of paid officials hired from the lowest ranks compared to the old regime which existed in the rule of Edward VII.

Her cowardice in dealing with coal strikes, etc., and pandering to the common people at vast expense, made England a laughing-stock not only to her colonies, but to every country in the world.

Again these were the general feelings in Munich in 1920, which I recorded on the spot.

Munich, I was told, was again, as before the war, the jolly town of meetings and processions. From all parts of Bavaria men marched through the streets with laughter in their faces, flowers on their hats, rifles over their shoulders. Shouting and cheering could be heard everywhere, beer-drinking, singing and speech-making would follow. In the procession were seen old familiar faces from the country; town councillors, important in their native places, here in Munich nothing else but jolly holiday-makers who wanted to enjoy themselves, and hoped to win a prize with their gun. Many of these would drink more beer or wine than was necessary, and some of them would perhaps not be quite responsible for their speeches, but none of them would upset the present government. Yet that meeting of the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr was something more than a congress of holiday-makers, it was the counter-movement to the Red Flag processions which had taken place in Munich earlier.

This time the men marching in procession had something to defend with their rifles; they wished to defend their property, to defend the old order of things. The men with the Red Ribbons and Flags had little to defend and perhaps little to lose, but they hoped to gain a lot, led by Utopists, idealistic schemers and selfish plotters.

Flags were to be seen everywhere in Munich, mostly the white and blue colours of Bavaria, now and then the black, white and red flag of the late-lamented Imperial Germany; the red bunting of the Socialist Republic flew nowhere. One flag high on the top of a house was intriguing, it was the flag of the Royal Bavarian family hoisted over the palace of two Bavarian princes, of the upright, smart Prince Alphonse with the single eye-glass, and of the stooping, spectacled Prince Ludwig Ferdinand, Doctor of Medicine and violin player of renown.

These two princes who, sure of their popularity, never failed to show their faces in Munich crowds all the time after the revolution, were that day not afraid to hoist their Royal flag in sympathy with the Einwohnerwehr meeting. It was different, I was told, eighteen months earlier, when the Red Flags were paraded in the streets. The sympathy with the Red Flag in Munich was forced. Now the sympathy with the Einwohnerwehr was deep and spontaneous.

It had been printed in a newspaper that the present assembly was arranged to restore Monarchy in Bavaria. Anyone who mixed with the crowd would realize that hardly any of them puzzled their minds much with the Monarchical question. What they wanted was law, order, trade, farming, no Socialist Utopism and no Communist disturbances or riots. The prayer for a Kingdom was the very last one on their lips. Quite another wish was in their hearts: the wish for restoration of some or of all the old Bavarian prerogatives roughly done away with by the Weimar Constitution, the wish for more consideration of their peculiarities and customs.

The new law-makers of Weimar and Berlin had so gained the distrust of the Bavarians that the cry "Away from Berlin"

became louder. Hearing this cry some Bavarian princes perhaps smiled, and the old King in his lonely castle behind Prien may have nodded his spectacled head and said : "I told you so."

The question of Monarchy or Republic was at that time, 1920, not urgent and of quite secondary importance, whilst the question of Federalism and Centralization was not identical with it. Some noisy busybodies had put the Monarchical question too much in the foreground.

After all, king or no king, this fact must never be overlooked : Germany was one economic unit. Munich and Berlin may not have liked one another yet they were obliged to work together.

But the powers and the influence of the mushroom-city of Berlin should be and could be curtailed, the good qualities and possibilities of Bavaria and Munich developed, before it is too late.

In August, 1920, I made a note as follows :

The French were, of course, very much disliked owing to what had happened in occupied Bavaria (Palatinate) as a result of black soldiers, heavy fines, etc. It was understood here that the French tried to take the Palatinate away from Bavaria altogether, accordingly they were mistrusted.

Here again one was able to gauge the German attitude towards England from reports gathered by me through influential people and otherwise, at that time, 1920.

Down to the early eighties France was always looked upon as Germany's enemy who was only waiting to get her *revanche*. Schoolboys had to hear from their teachers that they would have to be soldiers one day and fight the French. Years passed, the war with France did not come, but a new enemy began to appear in sight. This was *England*.

Since 1884 Germany began to acquire small territories on the African coast ; a race, a scramble for the unoccupied stretches of land in Africa was the result, and jealousy and animosity against England began to express itself in speeches and in the Press. It can safely be said that since about 1885 Germany had

a second enemy—England. The embers of jealousy were fanned into flame after the Jameson Raid, and during the South African War.

The German public was led to believe and did believe that now the day of glory had come, that South Africa would be lost to the British, that Boers and Afrikanders would throw themselves into the arms of Germany, that other colonies would follow suit and the British Empire be broken up altogether.

It is hard to describe what falsehood and nonsense was printed in the German Press during the Boer War.

In London, a German news agency was founded, which every day supplied the hungry German newspapers with imaginative Boer victories, English defeats and stories of British cruelty.

The London correspondent of the *Frankfurt Gazette*, Dr. R. Otto, exposed the agency's so-called "Cable Correspondence."

Most of the German papers still used this so-called "Cable Correspondence," and the Berlin *National Zeitung*, a paper of high standing, wrote: "We shall continue to use this news sheet as a correspondence printed in London."

Here was the serious difficulty of the situation, and the situation was as dangerous as it ever was during the last thirty years. German thought can go to the bottom of any problem, but in politics the Press as well as the public lack the training and sense of true responsibility.

Germany hardly realized even then how their Press had played with fire all these years by disparaging the British Empire and by making everybody, high German statesmen included, falsely believe that Germany was already "above all." Those few who knew better found no hearing.

So all these years, till the very outbreak of the war, English politics were criticized in German papers in such a way that altogether false distorted views of them had to appear in print. Whatever happened in English politics or in English society had to be misrepresented to please the German newspaper

readers and to make them say : " Thank God, we are above that."

This state of things could not easily be altered. German papers still played the same tune as before ; they now preached about the injustice done to Germany, and thus kept the feeling of revenge alive. That an altogether enlightened Germany should have materialized, that Europe should not have another such war, that the romantic dream of the holy German Empire was a thing of the past, that the only watchword of every German ought to be " Work and spare not," this true conception of things had not dawned in the German papers.

Yet there was a hope, there were still links with a better past, even in the German Press ; there were still connections with a time when the Germans were prominently a nation of poets and thinkers ; and in the revival of such old traditions and connections the hope of a better future could be looked for.

The Prussian problem, unlike most other political questions, has nothing to do with Nationalism, because a Prussian nationality or race does not exist.

The so-called Prussians are Saxons, Thuringians, Westphalians, Hessians and Franconians mixed with a good sprinkling of Slavonian blood in the eastern part ; but real Prussians are not to be found in Germany.

A *Kingdom* of Prussia has existed and has made history ; a Prussian Bureaucracy and Prussian Militarism may exist now in Republican Prussia, but a Prussian race or nationality does not exist. The so-called Prussianism is nothing else than a political system, which, like many other systems, has its good and bad sides.

The school books of Imperial Germany and of Hohenzollern Prussia never explained the real reason why the Northern Germans had to become Prussians, and why they are called so now, the fact is that at the end of the seventeenth century two German rulers, Frederic Augustus, Elector of Saxony, and Frederic III, Elector of Brandenburg, both jealous of one another and jealously admiring the splendour of the French

Court, desired to become kings. The Royal title, however, not being allowed inside Germany, had to be obtained from outside.

Frederic Augustus, in 1697, managed to be elected King of Poland and was crowned with great splendour at Cracow. Three years later his colleague, Frederic III of Hohenzollern, Elector of Brandenburg, succeeded in getting his Royal crown too, but in a more roundabout way.

There being no kingdom in the market, a new kingdom had to be made : the small Duchy of Prussia, not being part of the German Empire, but connected with Brandenburg by personal union, had to be raised to the rank of a kingdom, and its new owner called himself "King of Prussia." That means *not* king in Germany. The title "King of Prussia" was not really intended to be used inside Germany, just as the Indian Emperor's title of the British Sovereign is not used in Great Britain.

Down to the time of Frederic the Great, Prussia was still considered an outside dependency of Brandenburg. Berlin people used to say : "I am going to Prussia," when they travelled to Königsberg or Danzig. The real Prussians, a Slavonic tribe called Po-Russians, which means people living *near* the Russians, have long disappeared among the German colonists of their country ; their language has died out centuries ago ; the only literary monument of the Prussian language dates from the year 1561.

But if a Prussian race has long ceased to exist, the *title* of the so-called kings and the Prussian kingdom came into life in 1701 and gradually the subjects of the Hohenzollern rulers were called Prussians.

As the territories of the Prussian kings increased, their new subjects were called Prussians too. But up to now the inhabitants of Silesia, of Hanover, of Hessen and of the Rhine province call themselves "Must be Prussian" (Murz Prauzen), and the name "Prussian" is not popular with them even now.

This is the history given me in Germany of the Prussian. But are we any nearer to solving the origin of the Prussian ? He is

distinct from the rest of Germany, with his square head, thick neck, slit Slavonic eyes and high cheek bones.

It is always understood that if you scratch a Russian you find a Tartar. How about scratching a Prussian and seeing what happens? He has all the characteristics of a race down-trodden in generations past, which has hopped up again and become arrogant, like the nigger slave boy in later history we get from America, who, trodden down for countless years, now free, has hopped on to the platform and into orchestras—to make a big noise.

It must be kept in mind that if there is a great deal of anti-Prussian feeling in South Germany and elsewhere, on the other hand it cannot be overlooked that there are few people in Germany who do not admit that the Prussian system, which means its ruthless energy, its minute correctness, its unscrupulous thoroughness, has been in a sense a boon to Germany; that the Prussian corporal and the Prussian schoolmaster have given the Germans a training.

Compare this with the easy-going *laissez faire* of Southern Germany, and the open bribery and jobbery which were prevalent in Austria, where many a man could well wish for some more Prussian reliability and correctness.

But in the course of time (and this was explained to me by a Bavarian) the Prussian system has shown its bad side. It developed into Militarism, into Officialism and Kaiserism; and its mischievous results, he said, were apparent to everybody, and especially to those who suffered from it and who had to live under its rule.

The so-called "Must be Prussians" always remembered and remember now what rights they have lost and what rights they can aspire to again. At that period since the revolution had swept away the Hohenzollern dynasty, voices could be later heard which could hardly get a hearing before. There were people at Brunswick and Hanover, people at Kassel and Wiesbaden, who had always worked for the restitution of their rights of self-government, and for the curtailing of Berlin supremacy.

On a fine summer day my informant sat at Wiesbaden on a bench with some Wiesbaden citizens, and they said to him: "Should the war be lost and the left bank of the Rhine become French, we will go over to Mayence to get away from the Prussian rule." These words of worthy Wiesbadeners were really true and really meant.

But how were they consistent with the words of his Munich friends who praised the Prussian system? The inconsistency was only too apparent. Prussianism has its good sides and has done good for Germany, but Germany has had too much of it. The Prussian system was over strong, it ran amok, and now it wants restricting and curtailng.

Now, in Southern Germany a good many people want to see Prussianism restrained and curtailed, in the North and in Prussia itself. In those provinces upon which Prussian rule was enforced the delivery from evil is prayed for.

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CHAPTER XXII

THE ART OF LIVING

COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS—THE ENGLISH SPINSTER—SLACKNESS AND IGNORANCE—GLOOMY HOMES—"PIGGING IT"—THE WASP—WOMEN—A NEIGHBOUR.

. . . A good dinner is of great importance to good talk. One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well. The lamp in the spine does not light on beef and prunes. . . .

VIRGINIA WOOLF.

T a small town in France whilst at *déjeuner* in the "Couronne d'Or," I saw enter the dining-room four very large commercial travellers. The French *comis voyageur* is, as in England, a very worthy individual in the general make-up of the civilized world. Nay, I can go further, he is a necessity and, quite apart from his commercialism, a rather personable, homely bird as a rule.

In France he is usually of comfortable proportions; he is clothed invariably in black. Even his bowler hat has a broad mourning band round it. He is eminently respectable. Mourning, which he disports, gives the flavour of respectability.

All four who entered were tall—for Frenchmen—and therefore were all the more dignified. They were bearded and extremely rotund. They sat down to their round table with care and great dignity; they tucked the "serviette" down their collars with loving hands and with anticipation of good food to follow.

This was the midday meal, a ceremony to be treated with extreme reverence. Their genial faces spoke of good things to come.

I was very young, but I watched them with interest ; anything taken so seriously is always impressive.

The stage was set ; the *bon Dieu* would feed these worthy souls—these gourmets—if you like, with the best available.

They read the menu.

The atmosphere up to now benevolent and pleasant, altered. The four with quiet determination on their large faces carefully removed the napkins from under their chins, simultaneously rose to their feet, and with polite but firm steps, grasping their sombre hats, solemnly made their exit.

The menu was not a good one.

They would seek better food elsewhere and their decision was unanimous although given in silence. The *garçon* understood perfectly and bowed them out.

In the hotel was a spinster of uncertain years. Her remarks on the conduct of our four commercial travellers were according to expectation. Men lived for nothing but their food and comfort, etc. She herself was a sinister example of the self-effacing English female. She read a book at her meals, so little did the food interest her. The leg of any old chicken was good enough for her—if others preferred the breast. Her costume, a reckless one, matched the chicken's leg. She wished, upstairs, to make her own bed to save others the trouble ; and the *bonne* saw to it that she made her own bed.

Such kind weak men and women are not imposed on ; one does not impose on such creatures, one lets them stew in their own mess, lie on the uncomfortable beds they have made for themselves.

These are worthy people, intensely worthy—worthy to be trodden on. “Anything is good enough for them, they are so unselfish,” is the verdict.

But here let us pause a second. There are degrees of what we term “unselfishness.” True unselfishness is to deny oneself for the sake of others. The spinster and her like deny themselves nothing ; they have cringed all their lives ; they take a joy in

accepting second best, eating the fowl's drumstick—and foul food ; and they deserve it.

This is not unselfishness.

Personally if I had to judge the merits of the two characters, that of the four travellers who insist on the best available, and that of the spinster entrenched in her morbid self-effacement, the award goes to our commercial traveller ; he is an artist in life ; the self-denying lady is a failure in life. Utter indifference to the quality of the food one swallows originates from two sources, slackness and ignorance.

The art of living tastefully is comparatively rare. Apart from food one's fellow-man is often quite unobservant and indifferent to his surroundings.

As an example very few have any idea, for instance, of proportion and colour. For years they will live in rooms which are so distorted with shapeless furniture and unblending colours that there can be no feeling of peace and real comfort as we enter them.

Could they not learn to cultivate good taste for other people's sakes ? No, what is good enough for them is good enough for others.

These people will fail again in the matter of their gardens. They are unimaginative, their minds are sluggish and lack perception in their immediate surroundings. God's sunshine does not very often penetrate to the homes they live in, nor do they deserve it. Trees, shrubs and bushes grown close up to buildings shut out the sun and ensure damp walls ; and often hide the colour of old brick-work and the beauty of picturesque houses.

Their gardens are full of flowers—they will tell you they have plenty of flowers—flowers grown in countless small fussy beds, laid anywhere amongst unsightly gravel paths. Slackness and ignorance have prevented the owners of these faulty homes from feeling any desire to set the stage, the garden stage, artistically.

They are ignorant of the fact that those lovely flowers, all of them, require a setting ; a background to show them at their

best, just as a woman requires a lovely hat to show her sweet face to advantage.

So at their meals, in their houses, in their gardens they have never learnt the art of living gracefully.

Thank God, there are others, keenly observant, in sympathy with beauty, alive, full of resource, spreading their energy and efficiency all round them—whose way is strewn with graciousness—for these are artists in the art of living.

It is very doubtful to my mind whether games to excess such as bridge, golf, tennis, etc., are not a handicap to a wise and satisfactory existence.

All the hundred and one little things which make for happiness in a home for all who share that home, may be obliterated or slurred over by a mistress whose only thought is, for instance, to sit at a table in a frowsy, crowded atmosphere—winning sixpences off her neighbour.

A good housekeeper will set his or her house in order and then, for relaxation, will hie away to the links or tennis-court with joy, and with the knowledge that a swing of the club or tennis racquet will surely add strength in body and a zest to carry on. They will enjoy the pursuit of the ball, or their cunning at bridge, all the more with the knowledge that order and a well-run home await them on return.

Games to excess, whilst chaos and dirt reign in the home, spell demoralization.

I can think of no better life lived, with its ups and downs, than that of the small farmer, for instance, who has married wisely. I have met such men. They are in touch with and in tune with nature. Their homesteads good and clean in consequence.

Such men are so much better bred than their neighbours, who, never content with their lot, strive on like Mr. Toad of Toad Hall, and so long as they can be seen driving their conspicuous and vulgar cars, care nothing for the upkeep of their homes or for the welfare of their dependants; and become shameful to their old friends.

We must all prefer Mr. Badger, blunt, kind, hospitable and to be relied on.

There lies also in the art of living well that gift which the *bon Dieu* has mercifully vouchsafed to some of us—the gift of smiling under overwhelming disasters; and when we have seemingly lost all, be able to say: “I am still Captain of my soul.”

I can only think, at this moment, of one example of such a hero with such courage. My hero was not human. It was an insect, an optimist.

I have not as a rule more than a passing interest in the habits of insects until, of course, they sting or bite. However, on one occasion I was intensely absorbed in following the activities of a wasp, or rather, half a wasp. The little fellow I was watching had evidently suffered a “nasty mishap.”

It had lost, I may say, almost the whole of its body, and there remained only the head and shoulders. Its zeppelin-formed posterior had gone the way of all good things. The head, appearing to stand alert on four legs, was at that precise moment very busy eating honey out of a saucer, at racing speed. The motion of swallowing could be compared with that of a swift-action piston rod. The honey after passing rapidly down the small throat of my friend (or rather, of half my friend) was flung recklessly into space, and resembled the firing, or let us say backfiring, of a machine-gun.

How long this enjoyable but rather unsatisfying meal continued I cannot say. Human or otherwise, a head with no body, eating with gusto, must always be an object of interest.

But why must such perfect happiness so often end tragically? Before very long, with a smile on its honeyed lips, and a sagging of those four little knees, no doubt the wasp perished, murmuring: “Thank God for my good dinner, even if whilst partaking of it, I lose it—behind. Amen.”

I remember describing this incident to two friends of mine. One of them not unlike George Robey in his pleasant features.

He was very deaf, but listened eagerly. At the end of the wasp story, he said: "And who did you say that was?"

Surely this wasp represents the true optimist. It had very little left in this weary world, but it kept its head to the last. It had, in spite of reverses, great courage. It had the "guts" to carry on, I was going to say, but of course these had already departed—in the zeppelin.

At all events let us say the little innocent, but rather greedy, fellow made the best of what remained to him.

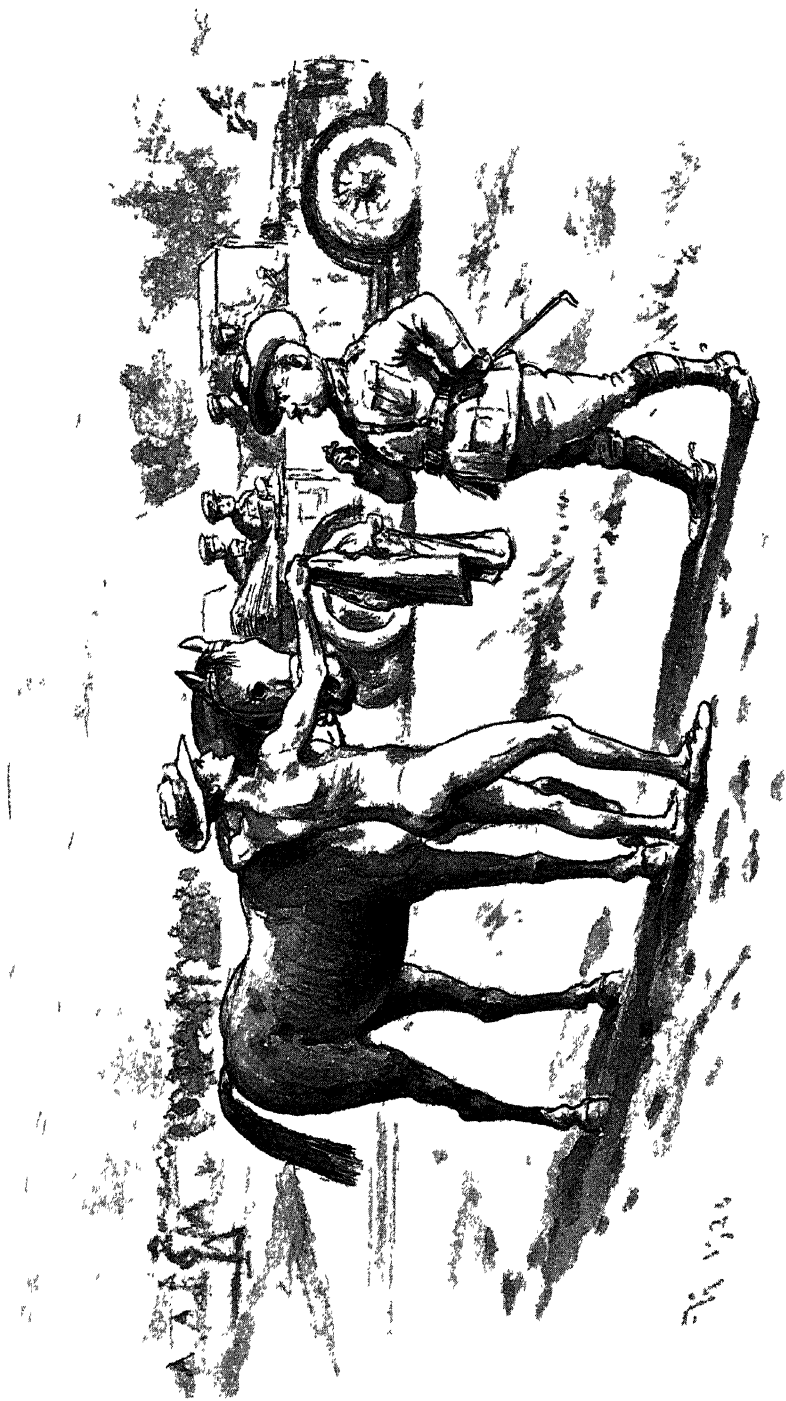
There are a great many men who take a pride in what is known as "roughing it." It becomes with practice a positive vice. This kink in their nature leads them, very often, into comic situations in which their fellow-man is unable to entirely sympathize.

In 1914, a brigadier I know, *en route* to France with the Expeditionary Force, announced to his brother officers that they were now in the throes of war and therefore that he would cease shaving. So we are to suppose this grizzled old hero appeared at breakfast each morning for four and a half years—unshaved.

A colonel, under whom I served in Palestine, took infinite pride in sleeping in a wet ditch, wrapped in a dirty mackintosh, whenever it was possible to do so; whereas we poor innocent junior officers, lesser fellows, were snug in our bivouacs, "X" beds and eiderdowns. This mania for sleeping on Mother Earth, when a perfectly good bed was available, failed to give that dazzling, heroic effect it was no doubt intended to give. Tommy Atkins' opinion of such conduct on the part of his officers hardly bears recording.

So long as your men are cared for, their officers should live as well as circumstances permit.

In the war in France the officers' mess for a time, well up to the front and often shelled, was in a canvas shelter behind a small haystack in an open field. It was always spotlessly clean, and the menu for dinner was usually hot soup, often roast



VERY WELL, THEN, TAKE THE DAMNED THINGS



MY THREE DAUGHTERS
JENNY, GIOIA AND ROSEMARY

chicken and a savoury, washed down with whisky and a glass of port. So that the young officers, I felt, could always look forward, after a day in the trenches and observing posts, to a good meal.

I daresay our Palestine hero would have sat down, unwashed and unshaved, to an unsavoury meal of stale bully-beef and a lump of bread, and his tired officers have had to make the best of it. But they would be none the better for "pigging it"; nor would such hardihood have shortened the war by even one day.

I feel I may have erred in the telling of my fifty years' yarn to the extent that I have not allowed enough latitude to my fellow-man for the weakness so latent in all of us, that of becoming too cocky or too shattered in moments of our little triumphs or disasters. It is not easy always to be well balanced, to keep on an even keel.

Experience and contact with many men in that world war taught us that the true leaders in important commands were humble, quiet and determined; the others in important commands, and wrongly chosen, were not humble or quiet, or even able to control themselves.

The folly was in the choosing of such men for high positions, or as leaders.

Women, God bless them, do not count in the meditation of this problem I am trying to solve: the virtue or vice of intolerance towards one's fellow-man. Few of them indeed are ever even-balanced for any length of time, although I would never dare tell them so.

I have met lately members of this gentler sex who were of ripe, nay, over-ripe age. One, the other day, a lady of fashion, argued with her daughter across a large luncheon-party, and the other ten guests present were obliged to listen in amazement to a mother and daughter squabbling over some point in the game of bridge which had occurred two weeks previously, their voices raised in anger about a subject which no one else in the room had any interest in or even understood. This grim

battle of words fought across the table continued on and on, the wranglers regardless of the feelings of their hostess and other guests who were comparative strangers.

Another woman I was asked to call on bred pug dogs. In the hall I tripped over one of these unfortunate canines. The house appeared filled with snuffling pugs.

Stained and discoloured sofas, chairs and carpets clearly indicated the presence of these noisome creatures. Conversation with the lady only led to a diatribe on the history of pug dogs, the shows where they had been exhibited, etc., whereas these pests should have been drowned at birth.

Want of balance and regard for other people's feelings was responsible for this pug-disease.

I remember a neighbour of ours well known in London. He was of enormous proportions, weighing over twenty stone. He was a great success with the ladies. One day he called on a lady friend, owner of a prize pekinese. She fed the peke on the white of chicken, Devonshire cream and *pâté de fois gras*, if the little epicure fancied these dainty tit-bits. Our friend awaited the arrival of the lady in her drawing-room. Presently as his hostess had not appeared he sat down—ponderously. As he sat in the arm-chair he thought he heard a squelch, but was not sure. Had he sat on something unpleasant? He arose from his deep seat. Yes, the squelch was a "sure thing." He had sat on, and utterly flattened out the pet pekinese; the squelch and squash were instantaneous. The peke was dead.

Everything to do with our neighbour was large and generous. Even in town clothes he carried large pockets as capacious as any keeper's and capable of carrying a brace of rabbits on each side of his gigantic quarters. He picked up the limp and deceased peke and stuffed it into his side pocket.

He had a delightful tea with his gracious hostess, during which repast they chatted amicably on intimate subjects.

The bulge in his right-hand pocket would not have been noticed as he paid his respects and walked out.

The pretty hostess never knew what happened to her

pampered peke, never knew that its mortal remains were snug in her admirer's pocket as he kissed her farewell.

But these stories quoted as examples of female unbalance are mere digressions. Perhaps after all I have been too scathing as regards some of my brother officers. I have not allowed sufficiently for human weakness; and fully conscious of the frailty of my fellow-man, have not been tolerant enough.

I feel, however, that when questions have to be solved and acted upon, that if we sat on the fence and tried to please all, like Mr. Baldwin, nothing would be accomplished. One must always see both sides of any question and act with force and determination—at the expense of unpopularity.

It is as well, therefore, to have narrated the various episodes in which as a soldier I have found fault now and then with my superiors (in rank).

CONCLUSION

. . . The thoughts by England given ;
Her sights and sounds ; dreams happy as her day ;
And laughter learnt of friends ; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

RUPERT BROOKE.



WE are coming to the last scene, the curtain is drawing down.

The reader will say : " What a happy life, in spite of the Friction, the Fun was always there, like Puck, ever ready to pop up and add a zest to a life which in spite of minute clouds was so warmed by the sun and good friends, and so full of intense interest."

Clouds that flee, leaving a blue sky.

When one realizes the millions of one's fellow-men who have known so little happiness and love, whose sky is seldom blue, how grateful one should be, eh, and how humble in one's gratitude, for those fifty years of happy life.

When unhappiness comes, if come it must, at least the author, for one, has happy years in his memory. . . .

Many there are who can only look forward, not back ; and the reason for this is simple : there has been little joy in their youth, they hope for joy to come.

It is indeed more courageous to look forward, but a happy past will ever be a solace.

I thought of age, and loneliness, and change.
I thought how strange we grow when we're alone,
And how unlike the selves that meet, and talk,
And blow the candles out, and say good night.
Alone. . . . The word is life endured and known.
It is the stillness where our spirits walk
And all but inmost faith is overthrown.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON.

A picture appears before me as I sit watching the glowing wood fire. . . .

High up on a green English hill I see three little figures. These small and graceful children are gazing over the valley at the peaceful English landscape spread before them, over the tree-tops and undulating hills beyond.

All three sweet figures are dainty. The eldest is twelve years old, the second nearly ten, and the youngest seven.

Fresh green grass, which only in England is so green, is their carpet. Tiny daisies and wild flowers are peeping up with inquisitive heads bowed forward by the soft spring breeze, listening eagerly to the chatter of these sweet human beings. A wee wren also, perched on a twig near by, has poked his cheeky little bill out of the bush, and with head on one side is listening . . . with beady eyes.

Such is their audience.

The three children are gazing over the trees, already sweetly and faintly green in the glowing sun. The eldest child is standing; her boyish figure clear against the background of blue sky; her small hand shades her dark eyes. She is speaking to her sisters who lie idly in the luscious grass: "Look, Gioia and Jenny, right away, far, far over the tree-tops in the distance, that black wood; see how gloomy it is; it is wrapt in mist.

What a terrible wood. Oh, look above that terrible wood; there is writing, Gioia. What does it spell? W A R . . . but see the letters are fading out . . . They are gone.

And that other word . . . M I S E R Y . . . Can you see above those gloomy trees? There is someone moving in the wood. . . . A man.

He moves slowly through that awful wood. . . . See, he is fighting his way through. There, he was nearly dragged back . . . into the mist and misery.

Watch him, he faces this way; his face is towards us. Ah, he is coming on; he will, I know, get through.

. . . He is outside, see, the sun shines on his face. How happy he looks.

He is looking up. . . . Why does he smile, Jenny . . . so happily ? ”

“ Because, Rosemary dear, he has seen . . . *us* . . . and it’s Daddy.”

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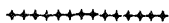
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